

FRONTISPIECE to VOL. XI.



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THE
WORKS
OF
HENRY FIELDING, Esq;
WITH
The LIFE of the AUTHOR.
In TWELVE VOLUMES.

VOL. XI.

A NEW EDITION.

TO WHICH IS NOW FIRST ADDED,
THE FATHERS;
OR, THE
GOOD-NATURED MAN.

L O N D O N:

Printed for W. STRAHAN, J. RIVINGTON and Sons, S. CROWDER,
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OF

HANWORTH BUILDING

WITH

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR



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A M E L I A.

B O O K VIII.

C H A P. I.

Being the first chapter of the eighth book.

TH E history must now look a little backwards to those circumstances, which led to the catastrophe mentioned at the end of the last book.

When Amelia went out in the morning, she left her children to the care of her husband. In this amiable office he had been engaged near an hour; and was at that very time lying along on the floor; and his little things crawling and playing about him, when a most violent knock was heard at the door; and immediately a footman, running up stairs, acquainted him, that his lady was taken violently ill, and carried into Mrs. Chenevix's toy-shop.

Booth no sooner heard this account, which was delivered with great appearance of haste and earnestness, than he leapt suddenly from the floor; and leaving his children roaring at the news of their mother's illness, in strict charge with his maid, he ran as fast as his legs could carry him to the place; or towards the place rather: for, before he arrived at the shop, a gentleman stopt him full butt, crying, 'Captain, whither so fast?'—Booth answered eagerly, 'Whoever you are, friend, don't ask me any questions now.'—'You must pardon me! captain,' answered the gentleman; 'me; but I have a little business with your honour—In short, captain, I have a small warrant here in my pocket against your
Vol. XI. B honour,

‘honour, at the suit of one Dr. Harrison.’ ‘You are a bailiff then,’ says Booth. ‘I am an officer, sir,’ answered the other.—‘Well, sir, it is in vain to contend,’ cries Booth; ‘but let me beg you will permit me only to step to Mrs. Chenevix’s—I will attend you, upon my honour, wherever you please; but my wife lies violently ill there.’—‘O, for that matter,’ answered the bailiff, ‘you may set your heart at ease. Your lady, I hope, is very well. I assure you, she is not there; you will excuse me, captain, these are only stratagems of war. *Bolus and virtus, quis in a hostes equirit?*’—‘Sir, I honour your learning,’ cries Booth, ‘and could almost kiss you for what you tell me. I assure you, I would forgive you five hundred arrests for such a piece of news. Well, sir, and whither am I to go with you?’—‘O, any where; where your honour pleases,’ cries the bailiff. ‘Then suppose we go to Brown’s coffee-house,’ said the prisoner. ‘No,’ answered the bailiff, ‘that will not do; that’s in the verge of the court.’ ‘Why then, to the nearest tavern,’ said Booth. ‘No, not to a tavern,’ cries the other, ‘that is not a place of security; and you know, captain, your honour is a shy cock; I have been after your honour these three months—Come, sir, you must go to my house, if you please.’ ‘With all my heart,’ answered Booth, ‘if it be any where hereabouts.’ ‘O, it is but a little ways off,’ replied the bailiff; ‘it is only in Gray’s-Inn-Lane, just by almost.’ He then called a coach, and desired his prisoner to walk in.

Booth entered the coach without any resistance, which had he been inclined to make, he must have plainly perceived would have been ineffectual, as the bailiff appeared to have several followers at hand, two of whom, beside the commander in chief, mounted with him into the coach. As Booth was a sweet-tempered man, as well as somewhat of a philosopher, he behaved with all the good humour imaginable, and, indeed, with more than his companions; who, however, shewed him what they call civility, that is, they neither struck him nor spit in his face.

Notwith-

Notwithstanding the pleasantry which Booth endeavoured to preserve, he in reality envied every labourer whom he saw pass by him in his way. The charms of liberty against his will rushed on his mind; and he could not avoid suggesting to himself, how much more happy was the poorest wretch, who without controul could repair to his homely habitation, and to his family; compared to him, who was thus violently, and yet lawfully, torn away from the company of his wife and children. And their condition, especially that of his Amelia, gave his heart many a severe and bitter pang.

At length he arrived at the bailiff's mansion, and was ushered into a room, in which were several persons. Booth desired to be alone; upon which the bailiff waited on him up stairs, into an apartment, the windows of which were well fortified with iron bars; but the walls had not the least outwork raised before them; they were, indeed, what is generally called naked, the bricks having been only covered with a thin plaister, which in many places was mouldered away.

The first demand made upon Booth was for coach-hire, which amounted to two shillings, according to the bailiff's account; that being just double the legal fare. He was then asked if he did not chuse a bowl of punch; to which, he having answered in the negative, the bailiff replied, 'Nay, sir, just as you please. I don't ask you to drink, if you don't chuse it; but certainly you know the custom; the house is full of prisoners, and I can't afford gentlemen a room to themselves for nothing.'

Booth presently took this hint, indeed it was a pretty broad one, and told the bailiff, he should not scruple to pay him his price; but in fact, he never drank unless at his meals. 'As to that, sir,' cries the bailiff, 'it is just as your honour pleases. I scorn to impose upon any gentleman in misfortunes: I wish you well out of them, for my part. Your honour can take nothing amiss of me, I only does my duty, what I am bound to do; and as you

‘ says you don’t care to drink any thing, what will you be pleased to have for dinner ? ’

Booth then complied in bespeaking a dish of meat, and told the bailiff, he would drink a bottle with him after dinner. He then desired the favour of pen, ink, and paper, and a messenger ; all which were immediately procured him, the bailiff telling him he might send wherever he pleased, and repeating his concern for Booth’s misfortunes, and a hearty desire to see the end of them.

The messenger was just dispatched with the letter, when, who should arrive but honest Atkinson ? A soldier of the guards, belonging to the same company with the serjeant, and who had known Booth at Gibraltar, had seen the arrest, and heard the orders given to the coachman. This fellow accidentally meeting Atkinson, had acquainted him with the whole affair.

At the appearance of Atkinson, joy immediately overspread the countenance of Booth. The ceremonies which past between them are unnecessary to be repeated. Atkinson was soon dispatched to the attorney, and to Mrs. Ellifon, as the reader hath before heard from his own mouth.

Booth now greatly lamented that he had writ to his wife. He thought she might have been acquainted with the affair better by the serjeant. Booth begged him, however, to do every thing in his power to comfort her, to assure her that he was in perfect health and good spirits, and to lessen as much as possible the concern, which he knew she would have at reading his letter.

The serjeant, however, as the reader hath seen, brought himself the first account of the arrest. Indeed, the other messenger did not arrive till a full hour afterwards. This was not owing to any slowness of his, but to many previous errands which he was to execute before the delivery of the letter : for, notwithstanding the earnest desire which the bailiff had declared to see Booth out of his troubles, he had ordered the porter, who was his follower, to call upon two or three other bailiffs, and as many attornies, to try

try to load his prisoner with as many actions as possible.

Here the reader may be apt to conclude, that the bailiff, instead of being a friend, was really an enemy to poor Booth; but, in fact, he was not so. His desire was no more than to accumulate bail bonds; for the bailiff was reckoned an honest and good sort of man in his way, and had no more malice against the bodies in his custody, than a butcher hath to those in his; and as the latter, when he takes his knife in hand, hath no idea but of the joints into which he is to cut the carcase; so the former, when he handles his writ, hath no other design but to cut out the body into as many bail bonds as possible. As to the life of the animal, or the liberty of the man, they are thoughts which never obtrude themselves on either.

CHAP. II.

Containing an account of Mr. Booth's fellow-sufferers.

BEFORE we return to Amelia, we must detain our reader a little longer with Mr. Booth, in the custody of Mr. Bondum the bailiff, who now informed his prisoner, that he was welcome to the liberty of the house with the other gentlemen.

Booth asked who those gentlemen were. 'One of them, sir,' says Mr. Bondum, 'is a very great writer or author, as they call him — He hath been here these five weeks, at the suit of a bookseller, for eleven pound odd money; but he expects to be discharged in a day or two: for he hath writ out the debt. He is now writing for five or six booksellers, and he will get you sometimes, when he sits to it, a matter of fifteen shillings a day. For he is a very good pen, they say; but is apt to be idle. Some days he won't write above five hours; but at other times I have known him at it above sixteen.' — 'Ay!' cries Booth, 'Pray, what are his productions?' — 'What doth he write?' Why sometimes,' answered Bondum, 'he writes your history books for your numbers, and sometimes your verses, your
B 3 poems,

‘poems, what do you call them? and then again he writes news for your news papers.’—‘Ay, indeed! he is a most extraordinary man truly—How doth he get his news here?’—‘Why he makes it, as he doth your parliament speeches for your Magazines. He reads them to us sometimes over a bowl of punch.—To be sure it is all one as if one was in the parliament house—It is about liberty and freedom, and about the constitution of England. I say nothing for my part, for I will keep my neck out of a halter; but faith, he makes it out plainly to me, that all matters are not as they should be. I am all for liberty, for my part.’ ‘Is that so consistent with your calling?’ cries Booth. ‘I thought, my friend, you had lived by depriving men of their liberty.’ ‘That’s another matter,’ cries the bailiff, ‘that’s all according to law, and in the way of business. To be sure, men must be obliged to pay their debts, or else there would be an end of every thing.’ Booth desired the bailiff to give him his opinion of liberty. Upon which, he hesitated a moment, and then cried out, ‘O, it is a fine thing, it is a very fine thing, and the constitution of England.’ Booth told him, that by the old constitution of England, he had heard that men could not be arrested for debt; to which the bailiff answered, that must have been in very bad times. ‘Because as why, says he, would it not be the hardest thing in the world if a man could not arrest another for a just and lawful debt? besides, sir, you must be mistaken: for, how could that ever be! is not liberty the constitution of England? well, and is not the constitution, as a man may say,—whereby the constitution, that is the law and liberty, and all that——’

Booth had a little mercy upon the poor bailiff, when he found him rounding in this manner, and told him he had made the matter very clear. Booth then proceeded to enquire after the other gentlemen, his fellows in affliction; upon which, Bondum acquainted him that one of the prisoners was a poor fellow. ‘He calls himself a gentleman,’ said Bondum; ‘but

‘ but I am sure I never saw any thing genteel by him.
‘ In a week that he hath been in my house, he hath
‘ drank only part of one bottle of wine. I intend to
‘ carry him to Newgate within a day or two, if he
‘ cannot find bail, which, I suppose, he will not be
‘ able to do : for every body says, he is an undone
‘ man. He hath run out all he hath by losses in busi-
‘ ness, and one way or other ; and he hath a wife and
‘ seven children. — Here was the whole family here
‘ the other day, all howling together. I never saw
‘ such a beggarly crew ; I was almost ashamed to see
‘ them in my house. I thought they seemed fitter for
‘ Bridewell than any other place. To be sure, I do
‘ not reckon him as proper company for such as you,
‘ sir ; but there is another prisoner in the house that
‘ I dare say you will like very much. He is, indeed,
‘ very much of a gentleman, and spends his money
‘ like one. I have had him only three days, and I
‘ am afraid he won’t stay much longer. They say,
‘ indeed, he is a gamester ; but what is that to me or
‘ any one, as long as a man appears as a gentleman ?
‘ I always love to speak by people as I find. And, in
‘ my opinion, he is fit company for the greatest lord
‘ in the land ; for he hath very good cloaths, and
‘ money enough. He is not here for debt, but upon
‘ a judge’s warrant for an assault and battery ; for
‘ the tipstaff locks up here.’

The bailiff was thus haranguing, when he was interrupted by the arrival of the attorney, whom the trusty serjeant had, with the utmost expedition, found out, and dispatched to the relief of his distressed friend. But before we proceed any further with the captain, we will return to poor Amelia, for whom, considering the situation in which we left her, the good-natured reader may be, perhaps, in no small degree solicitous.

C H A P. III.

Containing some extraordinary behaviour in Mrs. Ellifon.

THE serjeant being departed to convey Mrs. Ellifon to the captain, his wife went to fetch Amelia's children to their mother.

Amelia's concern for the distresses of her husband was aggravated at the sight of her children. 'Good Heavens!' she cried, 'what will, what can, become of these poor little wretches! why have I produced these little creatures only to give them a share of poverty and misery!' At which words she embraced them eagerly in her arms, and bedewed them both with her tears.

The children's eyes soon overflowed as fast as their mother's, though neither of them knew the cause of her affliction. The little boy, who was the elder, and much the sharper of the two, imputed the agonies of his mother to her illness, according to the account brought to his father in his presence.

When Amelia became acquainted with the child's apprehensions, she soon satisfied him that she was in a perfect state of health; at which the little thing expressed great satisfaction, and said, he was glad she was well again.—Amelia told him she had not been in the least disordered.—Upon which, the innocent cried out, 'La! how can people tell such fibs! a great tall man told my papa you was taken very ill at Mrs. somebody's shop; and my poor papa presently ran down stairs, I was afraid he would have broke his neck, to come to you.'

'O the villains,' cries Mrs. Atkinson, 'what a stratagem was here to take away your husband!'

'Take away!' answered the child—'What, hath any body taken away papa?—Sure that naughty fibbing man hath not taken away papa?'

Amelia begged Mrs. Atkinson to say something to her children; for that her spirits were overpowered. She then threw herself into a chair, and gave
a full

a full vent to a passion almost too strong for her delicate constitution.

The scene that followed, during some minutes, is beyond my power of description: I must beg the readers hearts to suggest it to themselves. The children hung on the mother, whom they endeavoured in vain to comfort; as Mrs. Atkinson did in vain attempt to pacify them, telling them, all would be well, and they would soon see their papa again.

At length, partly by the persuasions of Mrs. Atkinson, partly from consideration of her little ones, and more, perhaps, from the relief which she had acquired by her tears, Amelia became a little composed.

Nothing worth notice past in this miserable company from this time till the return of Mrs. Ellison from the bailiff's house; and to draw out scenes of wretchedness to too great a length, is a task very uneasy to the writer, and for which none but readers of a most gloomy complexion will think themselves ever obliged to his labours.

At length, Mrs. Ellison arrived, and entered the room with an air of gaiety, rather misbecoming the occasion. When she had seated herself in a chair, she told Amelia that the captain was very well, and in good spirits; and that he earnestly desired her to keep up hers. 'Come, madam,' said she, 'don't be disconsolate; I hope we shall soon be able to get him out of his troubles. The debts, indeed, amount to more than I expected; however, ways may be found to redeem him. He must own himself guilty of some rashness in going out of the verge, when he knew to what he was liable; but that is now not to be remedied. If he had followed my advice, this had not happened; but men will be head-strong.'

'I cannot hear this,' cries Amelia; 'shall I hear that best of creatures blamed for his tenderness to me?'

'Well, I will not blame him,' answered Mrs. Ellison, 'I am sure I propose nothing but to serve him: and if you will do as much to serve him yourself, he will not long be a prisoner.'

‘ I do!’ cries Amelia; ‘ Oh Heavens! is there a thing upon earth——’

‘ Yes, there is a thing upon earth,’ said Mrs. Ellison, ‘ and a very easy thing too.—And yet I will venture my life, you start when I propose it. And yet when I consider that you are a woman of understanding, I know not why I should think so; for sure you must have too much good sense to imagine that you can cry your husband out of prison. If this would have done, I see you have almost cried your eyes out already. And yet you may do the business by a much pleasanter way than by crying and bawling.’

‘ What do you mean, madam!’ cries Amelia.—‘ For my part, I cannot guess your meaning.’

‘ Before I tell you then, madam,’ answered Mrs. Ellison, ‘ I must inform you, if you do not already know it, that the captain is charged with actions to the amount of near five hundred pound. I am sure I would willingly be his bail; but I know my bail would not be taken for that sum. You must consider, therefore, madam, what chance you have of redeeming him; unless you chuse, as perhaps some wives would, that he should lie all his life in prison.’

At these words, Amelia discharged a shower of tears, and gave every mark of the most frantic grief.

‘ Why there now,’ cries Mrs. Ellison, ‘ while you will indulge these extravagant passions, how can you be capable of listening to the voice of reason? I know I am a fool in concerning myself thus with the affairs of others. I know the thankless office I undertake; and yet I love you so, my dear Mrs. Booth, that I cannot bear to see you afflicted, and I would comfort you, if you would suffer me. Let me beg you to make your mind easy; and within these two days, I will engage to set your husband at liberty.’

‘ Harkee, child, only behave like a woman of spirit this evening, and keep your appointment, notwithstanding what hath happened; and I am convinced there is one, who hath the power and the will to serve you.’

Mrs.

Mrs. Ellifon spoke the latter part of her speech in a whisper; so that Mrs. Atkinson, who was then engaged with the children, might not hear her; but Amelia answered aloud, and said, 'what appointment would you have me keep this evening?'

'Nay, nay, if you have forgot,' cries Mrs. Ellifon, 'I will tell you more another time; but come, will you go home? my dinner is ready by this time, and you shall dine with me.'

'Talk not to me of dinners,' cries Amelia. 'My stomach is too full already.'

'Nay, but, dear madam,' answered Mrs. Ellifon, — 'let me beseech you to go home with me. I do not care,' says she, whispering, 'to speak before some folks.'

'I have no secret, madam, in the world,' replied Amelia aloud, 'which I would not communicate to this lady: for I shall always acknowledge the highest obligations to her for the secrets she hath imparted to me.'

'Madam,' said Mrs. Ellifon, 'I do not interfere with obligations; I am glad the lady hath obliged you so much; and I wish all people were equally mindful of obligations. I hope, I have omitted no opportunity of endeavouring to oblige Mrs. Booth, as well as I have some other folks.'

'If by other folks, madam, you mean me,' cries Mrs. Atkinson, 'I confess, I sincerely believe you intended the same obligation to us both: and I have the pleasure to think it is owing to me that this lady is not as much obliged to you as I am.'

'I protest, madam, I can hardly guess your meaning,' said Mrs. Ellifon. — 'Do you really intend to affront me, madam?'

'I intend to preserve innocence and virtue, if it be in my power, madam,' answered the other. 'And sure nothing but the most eager resolution to destroy it, could induce you to mention such an appointment at such a time.'

'I did not expect this treatment from you, madam,' cries Mrs. Ellifon: 'Such ingratitude I could not have believed, had it been reported to me by any other.'

‘Such impudence,’ answered Mrs. Atkinson, must exceed, I think, all belief; but when women once abandon that modesty which is the characteristic of their sex, they seldom set any bounds to their assurance.’

‘I could not have believed this to have been in human nature,’ cries Mrs. Ellifson. ‘Is this the woman whom I have fed, have clothed, have supported? who owes to my charity, and my intercessions, that she is not at this day destitute of all the necessaries of life!’

‘I own it all,’ answered Mrs. Atkinson.—‘And I add the favour of a masquerade ticket to the number. Could I have thought, madam, that you would, before my face, have asked another lady to go to the same place with the same man!—But I ask your pardon, I impute rather more assurance to you than you are mistress of—You have endeavoured to keep the assignation a secret from me; and it was by mere accident only that I discovered it; unless there are some guardian angels, that in general protect innocence and virtue, though I may say I have not always found them so watchful.’

‘Indeed, madam,’ said Mrs. Ellifson, ‘you are not worth my answer, nor will I stay a moment longer with such a person.—So, Mrs. Booth, you have your choice, madam, whether you will go with me, or remain in the company of this lady.’

‘If so, madam,’ answered Mrs. Booth, ‘I shall not be long in determining to stay where I am.’

Mrs. Ellifson then, casting a look of great indignation at both the ladies, made a short speech full of invectives against Mrs. Atkinson, and not without oblique hints of ingratitude against poor Amelia; after which, she burst out of the room, and out of the house; and made haste to her own home, in a condition of mind, to which fortune without guilt cannot, I believe, reduce any one.

Indeed, how much the superiority of misery is on the side of wickedness, may appear to every reader who will compare the present situation of Amelia, with that of Mrs. Ellifson. Fortune had attacked the former

former with almost the highest degree of her malice. She was involved in a scene of most exquisite distress; and her husband, her principal comfort, torn violently from her arms; yet her sorrow, however exquisite, was all soft and tender; nor was she without many consolations. Her case, however hard, was not absolutely desperate; for scarce any condition of fortune can be so. Art and industry, chance and friends, have often relieved the most distress circumstances, and converted them into opulence. In all these she had hopes on this side the grave, and perfect virtue and innocence gave her the strongest assurances on the other. Whereas, in the bosom of Mrs. Ellison all was storm and tempest; anger, revenge, fear, and pride, like so many raging furies, possessed her mind, and tortured her with disappointment and shame. Loss of reputation, which is generally irreparable, was to be her lot; loss of friends is of this the certain consequence; all on this side the grave appeared dreary and comfortless; and endless misery on the other, closed the gloomy prospect.

Hence, my worthy reader, console thyself, that however few of the other good things of life are thy lot; the best of all things, which is innocence, is always within thy own power; and though fortune may make thee often unhappy, she can never make thee completely and irreparably miserable without thy own consent.

C H A P. IV.

Containing, among many matters, the exemplary behaviour of Colonel James.

W H E N Mrs. Ellison was departed, Mrs. Atkinson began to apply all her art to sooth and comfort Amelia; but was presently prevented by her: 'I am ashamed, dear madam,' said Amelia, 'of having indulged my affliction so much at your expence. The suddenness of the occasion is my only excuse; for had I had time to summon my resolution to my assistance, I hope I am mistress of more patience'

‘ence than you have hitherto seen me exert. I know, madam, in my unwarrantable excesses, I have been guilty of many transgressions. First, against that divine will and pleasure, without whose permission at least, no human accident can happen; in the next place, madam, if any thing can aggravate such a fault, I have transgressed the laws of friendship, as well as decency, in throwing upon you some part of the load of my grief; and again, I have sinned against common sense, which should teach me, instead of weakly and heavily lamenting my misfortunes, to rouse all my spirits to remove them. In this light, I am shocked at my own folly, and am resolved to leave my children under your care, and go directly to my husband. I may comfort him. I may assist him. I may relieve him. There is nothing now too difficult for me to undertake.’

Mrs. Atkinson greatly approved and complimented her friend on all the former part of her speech, except what related to herself, on which she spoke very civilly, and I believe with great truth; but as to her determination of going to her husband, she endeavoured to dissuade her, at least she begged her to defer it for the present, and till the serjeant returned home. She then reminded Amelia that it was now past five in the afternoon, and that she had not taken any refreshment but a dish of tea the whole day, and desired she would give her leave to procure her a chick, or any thing she liked better, for her dinner.

Amelia thanked her friend, and said, she would sit down with her to whatever she pleased; ‘but, if I do not eat,’ said she, ‘I would not have you impute it to any thing but want of appetite: for I assure you, all things are equally indifferent to me. I am more solicitous about these poor little things, who have not been used to fast so long. Heaven knows what may hereafter be their fate.’

Mrs. Atkinson bid her hope the best, and then recommended the children to the care of her maid.

And now arrived a servant from Mrs. James, with an invitation to Captain Booth and his lady, to dine with the colonel the day after the next. This a little perplexed

perplexed Amelia; but after a short consideration she dispatched an answer to Mrs. James, in which she concisely informed her of what had happened.

The honest serjeant, who had been on his legs almost the whole day, now returned, and brought Amelia a short letter from her husband; in which he gave her the most solemn assurances of his health and spirits, and begged her, with great earnestness, to take care to preserve her own; which, if she did, he said he had no doubt but that they should shortly be happy. He added something of hopes from my lord, with which Mrs. Ellison had amused him; and which served only to destroy the comfort that Amelia received from the rest of his letter.

Whilst Amelia, the serjeant and his lady were engaged in a cold collation, for which purpose a cold chick was procured from the tavern for the ladies, and two pound of cold beef for the serjeant; a violent knocking was heard at the door, and presently afterwards Colonel James entered the room. After proper compliments had past, the colonel told Amelia, that her letter was brought to Mrs. James while they were at table, and that on her shewing it him, he had immediately rose up, made an apology to his company, and took a chair to her. He spoke to her with great tenderness on the occasion, and desired her to make herself easy; assuring her, that he would leave nothing in his power undone to serve her husband. He then gave her an invitation, in his wife's name, to his own house, in the most pressing manner.

Amelia returned him very hearty thanks for all his kind offers; but begged to decline that of an apartment in his house. She said, as she could not leave her children, so neither could she think of bringing such a trouble with her into his family; and though the colonel gave her many assurances that her children as well as herself would be very welcome to Mrs. James, and even betook himself to entreaties, she still persisted obstinately in her refusal.

In real truth, Amelia had taken a vast affection for Mrs. Atkinson, of the comfort of whose company she could not bear to be deprived in her distress; nor to
exchange

exchange it for that of Mrs. James, to whom she had lately conceived no little dislike.

The colonel, when he found he could not prevail with Amelia to accept his invitation, desisted from any further solicitations. He then took a bank-bill of fifty pounds from his pocket-book, and said—
‘ You will pardon me, dear madam, if I chuse to impute your refusal of my house, rather to a dislike of my wife, who I will not pretend to be the most agreeable of women (all men,’ said he sighing, ‘ have not Captain Booth’s fortune,) than to any aversion or anger to me. I must insist upon it therefore, to make your present habitation as easy to you as possible.—I hope, madam, you will not deny me this happiness; I beg you will honour me with the acceptance of this trifle. He then put the note into her hand, and declared that the honour of touching it was worth a hundred times that sum.’

‘ I protest, Colonel James,’ cried Amelia blushing, ‘ I know not what to do or say, your goodness so greatly confounds me. Can I, who am so well acquainted with the many great obligations Mr. Booth already hath to your generosity, consent that you should add more to a debt we never can pay?’—

The colonel stopt her short, protesting that she misplaced the obligation: for that, if to confer the highest happiness was to oblige, he was obliged to her acceptance. ‘ And I do assure you, madam,’ said he, ‘ if this trifling sum, or a much larger, can contribute to your ease, I shall consider myself as the happiest man upon earth, in being able to supply it; and you, madam, my greatest benefactor in receiving it.’

Amelia then put the note in her pocket; and they entered into a conversation, in which many civil things were said on both sides; but what was chiefly worth remark was, that Amelia had almost her husband constantly in her mouth, and the colonel never mentioned him: the former seemed desirous to lay all obligations, as much as possible, to the account of her husband; and the latter endeavoured with the utmost

most delicacy to insinuate that her happiness was the main and indeed only point which he had in view.

Amelia had made no doubt, at the colonel's first appearance, but that he intended to go directly to her husband. When he dropt therefore a hint of his intention to visit him next morning, she appeared visibly shocked at the delay. The colonel perceiving this, said, 'However inconvenient it may be; yet, madam, if it will oblige you, or if you desire it, I will even go to-night.' Amelia answered, 'My husband would be far from desiring to derive any good from your inconvenience; but if you put it to me, I must be excused for saying, I desire nothing more in the world than to send him so great a comfort as I know he will receive from the presence of such a friend.' 'Then to shew you, madam,' cries the colonel, 'that I desire nothing more in the world than to give you pleasure, I will go to him immediately.'

Amelia then bethought herself of the serjeant, and told the colonel, his old acquaintance Atkinson, whom he had known at Gibraltar, was then in the house, and would conduct him to the place. The serjeant was immediately called in, paid his respects to the colonel, and was acknowledged by him. They both immediately set forward, Amelia to the utmost of her power pressing their departure.

Mrs. Atkinson now returned to Amelia, and was by her acquainted with the colonel's late generosity: for her heart so boiled over with gratitude, that she could not conceal the ebullition. Amelia likewise gave her friend a full narrative of the colonel's former behaviour and friendship to her husband, as well abroad as in England; and ended with declaring, that she believed him to be the most generous man upon earth.

Mrs. Atkinson agreed with Amelia's conclusion, and said she was glad to hear there was any such man. They then proceeded with the children to the tea table, where panegyric, and not scandal, was the topic of their conversation; and of this panegyric the colonel was the subject: both the ladies seeming to vie with

with each other in celebrating the praises of his goodness.

C H A P. V.

Comments upon authors.

HAVING left Amelia in as comfortable a situation as could possibly be expected, her immediate distresses relieved, and her heart filled with great hopes from the friendship of the colonel; we will now return to Booth, who, when the attorney and serjeant had left him, received a visit from that great author of whom honourable mention is made in our second chapter.

Booth, as the reader may be pleased to remember, was a pretty good master of the classics: for his father, though he designed his son for the army, did not think it necessary to breed him up a blockhead. He did not, perhaps, imagine that a competent share of Latin and Greek would make his son either a pedant or a coward. He considered likewise, probably, that the life of a soldier is in general a life of idleness; and might think that the spare hours of an officer in country quarters would be as well employed with a book, as in sauntering about the streets, loitering in a coffee-house, sitting in a tavern, or in laying schemes to debauch and ruin a set of harmless ignorant country girls.

As Booth was therefore what might well be called, in this age at least, a man of learning, he began to discourse our author on subjects of literature. ‘I think, sir,’ says he, ‘that Doctor Swift hath been generally allowed by the critics in this kingdom, to be the greatest master of humour that ever wrote. Indeed, I allow him to have possessed most admirable talents of this kind; and if Rabelais was his master, I think he proves the truth of the common Greek proverb—That the scholar is often superior to the master. As to Cervantes, I do not think we can make any just comparison; for though Mr. Pope compliments him with sometimes taking Cervantes’

‘serious

serious air.'—'I remember the passage,' cries the author:

'Oh thou, whatever title please thine ear,
'Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff or Gulliver;
'Whether you take Cervantes' serious air,
'Or laugh and shake in Rabelais' easy chair.'

'You are right, sir,' said Booth; 'but though I
'should agree that the doctor hath sometimes conde-
'scended to imitate Rabelais, I do not remember to
'have seen in his works the least attempt in the man-
'ner of Cervantes. But there is one in his own way,
'and whom I am convinced he studied above all
'others—— You guess, I believe, I am going to
'name Lucian. This author, I say, I am convinced
'he followed: but I think he followed him at a
'distance; as, to say the truth, every other writer
'of this kind hath done in my opinion: for
'none, I think, hath yet equalled him. I agree,
'indeed, entirely with Mr. Moile, in his Discourse
'on the age of the Philopatris, when he gives
'him the epithet of the incomparable Lucian; and
'incomparable, I believe, he will remain as long as
'the language in which he wrote shall endure. What
'an inimitable piece of humour is his Cock—'I
'remember it very well,' cries the author, 'his story
'of a Cock and a Bull is excellent.' Booth stared at
this, and asked the author what he meant by the
Bull? 'Nay,' answered he, 'I don't know very
'well upon my soul. It is a long time since I read
'him. I learnt him all over at school, I have not read
'him much since. And pray, sir,' said he, 'how do
'you like his Pharsalia? don't you think Mr. Rowe's
'translation a very fine one?' Booth replied, 'I
'believe we are talking of different authors. The
'Pharsalia, which Mr. Rowe translated, was written
'by Lucan; but I have been speaking of Lucian, a
'Greek writer, and, in my opinion, the greatest in
'the humourous way, that ever the world produced.'
'Ay!' cries the author, 'he was indeed so, a very
'excellent writer indeed. I fancy a translation of
him

‘ him would sell very well.’ ‘ I do not know, indeed,’ cries Booth. ‘ A good translation of him would be a valuable book. I have seen a wretched one published by Mr. Dryden, but translated by others, who in many places have misunderstood Lucian’s meaning, and have no where preserved the spirit of the original.’ ‘ That is great pity,’ says the author. ‘ Pray, sir, is he well translated into French?’ Booth answered, he could not tell; but that he doubted it very much, having never seen a good version into that language, out of the Greek. ‘ To confess the truth, I believe,’ said he, ‘ the French translators have generally consulted the Latin only; which, in some of the few Greek writers I have read, is tolerably bad. And as the English translators, for the most part, pursue the French, we may easily guess, what spirit those copies of bad copies must preserve of the original.’

‘ Egad, you are a shrewd guesser,’ cries the author. ‘ I am glad the booksellers have not your sagacity. But how should it be otherwise, considering the price they pay by the sheet? The Greek, you will allow, is a hard language; and there are few gentlemen that write, who can read it without a good lexicon. Now, sir, if we were to afford time to find out the true meaning of words, a gentleman would not get bread and cheese by his work. If one was to be paid, indeed, as Mr. Pope was for his Homer.—Pray, sir, don’t you think that the best translation in the world?’

‘ Indeed, sir,’ cries Booth, ‘ I think, though it is certainly a noble paraphrase, and of itself a fine poem, yet, in some places, it is no translation at all. In the very beginning, for instance, he hath not rendered the true force of the author. Homer invokes his Muse in the five first lines of the Iliad; and, at the end of the fifth, he gives his reason:

‘ Δίδε δ’ ἑταλείης βουλῇ.

‘ For all these things,’ says he, ‘ were brought about by the decree of Jupiter; and, therefore, he supposes

'supposes their true sources are known only to the deities. Now, the translation takes no more notice of the ΔE , than if no such word had been there.'

'Very possibly,' answered the author; 'it is a long time since I read the original. Perhaps, then, he followed the French translations. I observe, indeed, he talks much in the notes of Madam Dacier, and Monsieur Eustathius.'

Booth had now received conviction enough of his friend's knowledge of the Greek language; without attempting, therefore, to set him right, he made a sudden transition to the Latin. 'Pray sir,' said he, 'as you have mentioned Rowe's translation of the *Pharsalia*, do you remember, how he hath rendered that passage in the character of Cato?

—— *Venerisque huic maximus usus
Progenies; urbi Pater est, urbique Maritus.*

'For I apprehend that passage is generally misunderstood.'

'I really do not remember,' answered the author.— 'Pray sir, what do you take to be the meaning?'

'I apprehend, sir,' replied Booth, 'that, by these words, *Urbi Pater est, Urbique Maritus*, Cato is represented as the father and husband to the city of Rome.'

'Very true, sir,' cries the author; 'very fine, indeed.—Not only the father of his country, but the husband too; very noble, truly.'

'Pardon me, sir,' cries Booth, 'I do not conceive that to have been Lucan's meaning. If you please to observe the context: Lucan, having commended the temperance of Cato, in the instances of diet and clothes, proceeds to venereal pleasures; of which, says the poet, his principal use was procreation: then he adds, *Urbi pater est, Urbique Maritus*; that he became a father and a husband, for the sake only of the city.'

'Upon my word, that's true,' cries the author; 'I did not think of it. It is much finer than the other.'

—*Urbis*

‘—*Urbis Pater est*—what is the other?—ay—*Urbis Maritus*.—It is certainly as you say, sir.’

Booth was, by this, pretty well satisfied of the author’s profound learning; however, he was willing to try him a little further. He asked him, therefore, what was his opinion of Lucan in general, and in what class of writers he ranked him.

The author stared a little at this question; and, after some hesitation, answered, ‘Certainly, sir, I think he is a fine writer, and a very great poet.’

‘I am very much of the same opinion,’ cries Booth; ‘but where do you class him, next to what poet do you place him?’

‘Let me see,’ cries the author, ‘where do I class him! next to whom do I place him!—Ay!—why!’

‘—why, pray, where do you yourself place him?’

‘Why, surely,’ cries Booth, ‘if he is not to be placed in the first rank, with Homer, and Virgil, and Milton—I think clearly, he is at the head of the second; before either Statius, or Silius Italicus. —Though I allow to each of these their merits; but, perhaps, an epic poem was beyond the genius of either. I own, I have often thought, if Statius had ventured no farther than Ovid or Claudian, he would have succeeded better: for his *Sylvæ* are, in my opinion, much better than his *Thebais*.’

‘I believe, I was of the same opinion formerly,’ said the author.

‘And for what reason have you altered it?’ cries Booth.

‘I have not altered it,’ answered the author; ‘but, to tell you the truth, I have not any opinion at all about these matters at present. I do not trouble my head much with poetry: for there is no encouragement to such studies in this age. It is true, indeed, I have now and then wrote a poem or two for the Magazines; but I never intend to write any more: for a gentleman is not paid for his time. A sheet is a sheet with the booksellers; and, whether it be in prose or verse, they make no difference; though certainly there is as much difference to a gentleman in the work, as there is to a taylor, be-
tween

'tween making a plain and a laced suit. Rhimes are difficult things; they are stubborn things, fir. I have been sometimes longer in tagging a couplet, than I have been in writing a speech on the side of the opposition, which hath been read with great applause all over the kingdom.'

'I am glad you are pleased to confirm that,' cries Booth: 'for I protest, it was an entire secret to me till this day. I was so perfectly ignorant, that I thought the speeches, published in the Magazines, were really made by the members themselves.'

'Some of them, and I believe I may, without vanity, say, the best,' cries the author, 'are all the production of my own pen; but, I believe, I shall leave it off soon, unless a sheet of speech will fetch more than it does at present. In truth, the romance-writing is the only branch of our business now, that is worth following. Goods of that sort have had so much success lately in the market, that a bookseller scarce cares what he bids for them. And it is certainly the easiest work in the world; you may write it almost as fast as you can set pen to paper; and if you interlard it with a little scandal, a little abuse on some living characters of note, you cannot fail of success.'

'Upon my word, fir,' cries Booth, 'you have greatly instructed me. I could not have imagined, there had been so much regularity in the trade of writing, as you are pleased to mention; by what I can perceive, the pen and ink is likely to become the staple commodity of the kingdom.'

'Alas! fir,' answered the author, 'it is overstocked.—The market is overstocked. There is no encouragement to merit, no patrons. I have been these five years soliciting a subscription for my new translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses, with notes explanatory, historical, and critical; and I have scarce collected five hundred names yet.'

The mention of this translation a little surprised Booth; not only as the author had just declared his intentions to forsake the tuneful Muses; but for some other reasons, which he had collected from his conversation

versation with our author, he little expected to hear of a proposal to translate any of the Latin poets. He proceeded, therefore, to catechise him a little farther; and by his answers was fully satisfied, that he had the very same acquaintance with Ovid, that he had appeared to have with Lucan.

The author then pulled out a bundle of papers, containing proposals for his subscription, and receipts; and addressing himself to Booth, said, 'Though the place in which we meet, sir, is an improper place to solicit favours of this kind; yet, perhaps, it may be in your power to serve me, if you will charge your pockets with some of these.' Booth was just offering at an excuse, when the bailiff introduced Colonel James, and the serjeant.

The unexpected visit of a beloved friend to a man in affliction, especially in Mr. Booth's situation, is a comfort which can scarce be equalled; not barely from the hopes of relief, or redress, by his assistance; but as it is an evidence of sincere friendship, which scarce admits of any doubt or suspicion. Such an instance doth, indeed, make a man amends for all ordinary troubles and distresses; and we ought to think ourselves gainers, by having had such an opportunity of discovering, that we are possessed of one of the most valuable of all human possessions.

Booth was so transported at the sight of the colonel, that he dropt the proposals which the author had put into his hand, and burst forth into the highest professions of gratitude to his friend, who behaved very properly on his side, and said every thing which became the mouth of a friend on the occasion.

It is true, indeed, he seemed not moved equally, either with Booth or the serjeant; both whose eyes watered at the scene. In truth, the colonel, though a very generous man, had not the least grain of tenderness in his disposition. His mind was formed of those firm materials, of which nature formerly hammered out the Stoic, and upon which, the sorrows of no man living could make an impression. A man of this temper, who doth not much value danger, will fight for the person he calls his friend; and the man that hath
but

but little value for his money will give it him ; but such friendship is never to be absolutely depended on : for whenever the favourite passion interposes with it, it is sure to subside and vanish into air. Whereas, the man, whose tender disposition really feels the miseries of another, will endeavour to relieve them for his own sake ; and, in such a mind, friendship will often get the superiority over every other passion.

But, from whatever motive it sprung, the colonel's behaviour to Booth seemed truly amiable ; and so it appeared to the author, who took the first occasion to applaud it in a very florid oration ; which the reader, when he recollects that he was a speech-maker by profession, will not be surprized at ; nor, perhaps, will be much more surprized, that he soon after took an occasion of clapping a proposal into the colonel's hands ; holding at the same time a receipt very visible in his own.

The colonel received both, and gave the author a guinea in exchange, which was double the sum mentioned in the receipt ; for which the author made a low bow, and very politely took his leave, saying, ' I suppose, gentlemen, you may have some private business together ; I heartily wish a speedy end to your confinement ; and I congratulate you on the possessing so great, so noble, and so generous a friend.'

C H A P. VI.

Which inclines rather to satire than panegyric.

THE colonel had the curiosity to ask Booth the name of the gentleman, who, in the vulgar language, had struck, or taken him in for a guinea, with so much ease and dexterity. Booth answered, he did not know his name ; all that he knew of him was, that he was the most impudent and illiterate fellow he had ever seen ; and that, by his own account, he was the author of most of the wonderful productions of the age. ' Perhaps,' said he, ' it may look uncharitable in me, to blame you for your generosity ;

‘ but I am convinced the fellow hath not the least merit or capacity; and you have subscribed to the most horrid trash that ever was published!’

‘ I care not a farthing what he publishes,’ cries the colonel. ‘ Heaven forbid, I should be obliged to read half the nonsense I have subscribed to.’

‘ But, don’t you think,’ said Booth, ‘ that by such indiscriminate encouragement of authors, you do a real mischief to the society? by propagating the subscriptions of such fellows, people are tired out, and with-hold their contributions to men of real merit; and, at the same time, you are contributing to fill the world, not only with nonsense, but with all the scurrility, indecency, and profaneness, with which the age abounds; and with which all bad writers supply the defect of genius.’

‘ Pugh!’ cries the colonel, ‘ I never consider these matters. Good or bad, it is all one to me; but there’s an acquaintance of mine, and a man of great wit too, that thinks the worst the best, as they are the surest to make him laugh.’

‘ I ask pardon, sir,’ says the serjeant; ‘ but I wish your honour would consider your own affairs a little; for it grows late in the evening.’

‘ The serjeant says true,’ answered the colonel. ‘ What is it you intend to do?’

‘ Faith, colonel, I know not what I shall do. My affairs seem so irreparable, that I have been driving them, as much as possibly I could, from my mind. If I was to suffer alone, I think, I could bear them with some philosophy; but when I consider who are to be the sharers in my fortune—the dearest of children; and the best, the worthiest, and the noblest of women. Pardon me, my dear friend; these sensations are above me, they convert me into a woman; they drive me to despair, to madness.’

The colonel advised him to command himself; and told him this was not the way to retrieve his fortune. ‘ As to me, my dear Booth,’ said he, ‘ you know, you may command me as far as is really within my power.’

Booth

Booth answered eagerly, that he was so far from expecting any more favours from the colonel, that he had resolved not to let him know any thing of his misfortune. 'No, my dear friend,' cries he, 'I am too much obliged to you already;' and then burst into many fervent expressions of gratitude; till the colonel himself stopt him, and begged him to give an account of the debt or debts, for which he was detained in that horrid place.

Booth answered, he could not be very exact; but he feared it was upwards of four hundred pounds.

'It is but three hundred pounds, indeed, sir,' cries the serjeant; 'if you can raise three hundred pounds, you are a free man this moment.'

Booth, who did not apprehend the generous meaning of the serjeant, as well as, I believe, the reader will, answered, he was mistaken; that he had computed his debts, and they amounted to upwards of four hundred pounds: nay, that the bailiff had shewn him writs for above that sum.

'Whether your debts are three or four hundred,' cries the colonel, 'the present business is to give bail only; and then you will have some time to try your friends. I think you might get a company abroad; and then I would advance the money on the security of half your pay: and, in the mean time, I will be one of your bail with all my heart.'

While Booth poured forth his gratitude for all this kindness, the serjeant ran down stairs for the bailiff; and shortly after returned with him into the room.

The bailiff, being informed that the colonel offered to be bail for his prisoner, answered a little furly, 'Well, sir, and who will be the other? you know, I suppose, there must be two; and I must have time to enquire after them.'

The colonel replied, 'I believe, sir, I am well known to be responsible for a much larger sum than your demand on this gentleman; but if your forms require two, I suppose the serjeant here will do for the other.'

‘ I don’t know the serjeant, nor you either, sir,’ cries Bondum; ‘ and if you propose yourselves bail for the gentleman, I must have time to enquire after you.’

‘ You need very little time to enquire after me,’ says the colonel; ‘ for I can send for several of the law, whom I suppose you know, to satisfy you; but consider, it is very late.’

‘ Yes, sir,’ answered Bondum, ‘ I do consider it is too late for the captain to be bailed to-night.’

‘ What do you mean by too late?’ cries the colonel.

‘ I mean, sir, that I must search the office, and that is now shut up: for if my lord mayor and the court of aldermen would be bound for him, I would not discharge him, till I had searched the office.’

‘ How, sir,’ cries the colonel, ‘ hath the law of England no more regard for the liberty of the subject, than to suffer such fellows as you to detain a man in custody for debt, when he can give undeniable security?’

‘ Don’t fellow me,’ said the bailiff, ‘ I am as good a fello was yourself, I believe, though you have that ribband in your hat there.’

‘ Do you know who you are speaking to?’ said the serjeant. ‘ Do you know you are talking to a colonel of the army?’

‘ What’s a colonel of the army to me!’——cries the bailiff. ‘ I have had as good as he in my custody before now.’

‘ And a member of parliament,’——cries the serjeant.

‘ Is the gentleman a member of parliament?——

‘ Well, and what harm have I said—I am sure, I meant no harm, and if his honour is offended, I ask his pardon; to be sure, his honour must know that the sheriff is answerable for all the writs in the office, though they were never so many, and I am answerable to the sheriff. I am sure the captain can’t say that I have shewn him any manner of incivility since he hath been here.—And I hope, honourable sir,’ cries he, turning to the colonel, ‘ you don’t take any thing amiss that I said, or meant by way of
disre-

‘disrespect, or any such matter. I did not, indeed, as the gentleman here says, know who I was speaking to; but I did not say any thing uncivil as I know of, and I hope no offence.’

The colonel was more easily pacified than might have been expected, and told the bailiff that if it was against the rules of law to discharge Mr. Booth that evening, he must be contented. He then addressed himself to his friend, and began to prescribe comfort and patience to him; saying, he must rest satisfied with his confinement that night, and the next morning he promised to visit him again.

Booth answered, that as for himself, the lying one night in any place was very little worth his regard. ‘You and I, my dear friend, have both spent our evening in a worse situation than I shall in this house. All my concern is for my poor Amelia, whose sufferings on account of my absence I know, and I feel with unspeakable tenderness. Could I be assured she was tolerably easy, I could be contented in chains or in a dungeon.’

‘Give yourself no concern on her account,’ said the colonel. ‘I will wait on her myself, though I break an engagement for that purpose, and will give her such assurances as I am convinced will make her perfectly easy.’

Booth embraced his friend, and weeping over him, paid his acknowledgments with tears, for all his goodness. In words, indeed, he was not able to thank him; for gratitude joining with his other passions almost choaked him, and stopt his utterance.

After a short scene, in which nothing past worth recounting, the colonel bid his friend good night; and leaving the serjeant with him, made the best of his way back to Amelia.

CHAP. VII.

Worthy a very serious perusal.

THE colonel found Amelia sitting very disconsolate with Mrs. Atkinson. He entered the room with an air of great gaiety, assured Amelia that

her husband was perfectly well, and that he hoped the next day he would again be with her.

Amelia was a little comforted at this account; and vented many grateful expressions to the colonel, for his unparalleled friendship, as she was pleased to call it. She could not, however, help giving way soon after to a sigh, at the thoughts of her husband's bondage, and declared that night would be the longest she had ever known.

'This lady, madam,' cries the colonel, 'must endeavour to make it shorter. And if you will give me leave, I will join in the same endeavour.' Then after some more consolatory speeches, the colonel attempted to give a gay turn to the discourse; and said, 'I was engaged to have spent this evening disagreeably at Ranelagh, with a set of company I did not like. How vastly am I obliged to you, dear Mrs. Booth, that I pass it so infinitely more to my satisfaction!'

'Indeed, colonel,' said Amelia, 'I am convinced that to a mind so rightly turned as yours, there must be a much sweeter relish in the highest offices of friendship, than in any pleasures which the gayest public places can afford.'

'Upon my word, madam,' said the colonel, 'you now do me no more than justice. I have, and always had, the utmost indifference for such pleasures. Indeed, I hardly allow them worthy of that name, or, if they are so at all, it is in a very low degree. In my opinion, the highest friendship must always lead us to the highest pleasure.'

Here Amelia entered into a long dissertation on friendship, in which she pointed several times directly at the colonel as the hero of her tale.

The colonel highly applauded all her sentiments; and when he could not avoid taking the compliment to himself, he received it with a most respectful bow. He then tried his hand likewise at description, in which he found means to repay all Amelia's panegyric in kind. This though he did with all possible delicacy, yet a curious observer might have been apt to suspect that

that it was chiefly on her account that the colonel had avoided the masquerade.

In discourses of this kind they past the evening, till it was very late, the colonel never offering to stir from his chair before the clock had struck one; when he thought, perhaps, that decency obliged him to take his leave.

As soon as he was gone, Mrs. Atkinson said to Mrs. Booth, 'I think, madam, you told me this afternoon, that the colonel was married.'

Amelia answered, she did so.

'I think, likewise, madam,' said Mrs. Atkinson, 'you was acquainted with the colonel's lady.'

Amelia answered, that she had been extremely intimate with her abroad.

'Is she young, and handsome?' said Mrs. Atkinson: 'In short, pray, was it a match of love or convenience?'

Amelia answered, entirely of love, she believed, on his side: for that the lady had little or no fortune.

'I am very glad to hear it,' said Mrs. Atkinson: 'For I am sure the colonel is in love with somebody. I think, I never saw a more luscious picture of love drawn than that which he was pleased to give us, as the portraiture of friendship. I have read, indeed, of Pylades and Orestes, Damon and Pythias, and other great friends of old; nay, I sometimes flatter myself that I am capable of being a friend myself; but as for that fine, soft, tender, delicate passion, which he was pleased to describe, I am convinced there must go a he and a she to the composition.'

'Upon my word, my dear, you are mistaken,' cries Amelia. 'If you had known the friendship which hath always subsisted between the colonel and my husband, you would not imagine it possible for any description to exceed it. Nay, I think his behaviour this very day is sufficient to convince you.'

'I own what he hath done to-day hath great merit,' said Mrs. Atkinson; 'and yet, from what he hath said to-night —— You will pardon me, dear ma-

‘dam; perhaps I am too quick-sighted in my observations, nay, I am afraid I am even impertinent.’

‘Fie upon it,’ cries Amelia, ‘how can you talk in that strain? do you imagine I expect ceremony; ——— Pray speak what you think with the utmost freedom.’

‘Did he not then,’ said Mrs. Atkinson, ‘repeat the words, *the finest woman in the world*, more than once? did he not make use of an expression which might have become the mouth of Oroondates himself? ——— If I remember, the words were these, “That had he been Alexander the Great, he should have thought it more glory to have wiped off a tear from the bright eyes of Statira, than to have conquered fifty worlds.”’

‘Did he say so?’ cries Amelia ——— ‘I think he did say something like it; but my thoughts were so full of my husband, that I took little notice. But what would you infer from what he said? I hope you don’t think he is in love with me!’

‘I hope he doth not think so himself,’ answered Mrs. Atkinson; ‘though when he mentioned the bright eyes of Statira, he fixed his own eyes on yours with the most languishing air I ever beheld.’

Amelia was going to answer, when the serjeant arrived, and then she immediately fell to enquiring after her husband; and received such satisfactory answers to all her many questions concerning him, that she expressed great pleasure. These ideas so possessed her mind, that without once casting her thoughts on any other matters, she took her leave of the serjeant and his lady, and repaired to bed to her children, in a room which Mrs. Atkinson had provided her in the same house; where we will at present wish her a good night.

C H A P. VIII.

Consisting of grave matters.

W H I L E innocence and chearful hope, in spite of the malice of fortune, closed the eyes of the

the gentle Amelia, on her homely bed, and she enjoyed a sweet and profound sleep; the colonel lay restless all night on his down; his mind was affected with a kind of ague fit; sometimes scorched up with flaming desires, and again chilled with the coldest despair.

There is a time, I think, according to one of our poets, *When lust and envy sleep*. This, I suppose, is when they are well gorged with the food they most delight in; but while either of these are hungry,

Nor poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the east,
Will ever medicine them to slumber.

The colonel was, at present, unhappily tormented by both these fiends. His last evening's conversation with Amelia had done his business effectually. The many kind words she had spoken to him, the many kind looks she had given him, as being, she conceived, the friend and preserver of her husband, had made an entire conquest of his heart. Thus, the very love which she bore him, as the person to whom her little family were to owe their preservation and happiness, inspired him with thoughts of sinking them all in the lowest abyss of ruin and misery; and while she smiled with all her sweetness on the supposed friend of her husband, she was converting that friend into his most bitter enemy.

Friendship, take heed; if woman interfere,
Be sure the hour of thy destruction's near.

These are the lines of Vanbrugh; and the sentiment is better than the poetry. To say the truth, as a handsome wife is the cause and cement of many false friendships, she is often too liable to destroy the real ones.

Thus the object of the colonel's lust very plainly appears; but the object of his envy may be more difficult to discover. Nature and fortune had seemed to strive with a kind of rivalry, which should bestow most on

the colonel. The former had given him person, parts, and constitution, in all which he was superior to almost every other man. The latter had given him rank in life, and riches, both in a very eminent degree. Whom then should this happy man envy? here, lest ambition should mislead the reader to search the palaces of the great, we will direct him at once to Gray's-Inn-Lane; where, in a miserable bed, in a miserable room, he will see a miserable broken lieutenant, in a miserable condition, with several heavy debts on his back, and without a penny in his pocket. This, and no other, was the object of the colonel's envy. And why? because this wretch was possessed of the affections of a poor little lamb; which all the vast flocks that were within the power and reach of the colonel, could not prevent that glutton's longing for. And sure this image of the lamb is not improperly adduced on this occasion: for what was the colonel's desire but to lead this poor lamb, as it were, to the slaughter, in order to purchase a feast of a few days by her final destruction, and to tear her away from the arms of one where she was sure of being fondled and caressed all the days of her life.

While the colonel was agitated with these thoughts, his greatest comfort was, that Amelia and Booth were now separated, and his greatest terror was of their coming again together. From wishes therefore he began to meditate designs; and so far was he from any intention of procuring the liberty of his friend, that he began to form schemes of prolonging his confinement, till he could procure some means of sending him away far from her; in which case he doubted not but of succeeding in all he desired.

He was forming this plan in his mind, when a servant informed him, that one serjeant Atkinson desired to speak with his honour. The serjeant was immediately admitted, and acquainted the colonel, that if he pleased to go and become bail for Mr. Booth, another unexceptionable house-keeper would be there to join with him. This person the serjeant had procured that morning, and had, by leave of his wife, given him a bond of indemnification for the purpose.

The colonel did not seem so elated with this news as Atkinson expected. On the contrary, instead of making a direct answer to what Atkinson said, the colonel began thus: 'I think, serjeant, Mr. Booth hath told me that you was foster-brother to his lady. She is really a charming woman, and it is a thousand pities she should ever have been placed in the dreadful situation she is now in. There is nothing so silly as for subaltern officers of the army to marry, unless where they meet with women of very great fortunes indeed. What can be the event of their marrying otherwise, but entailing misery and beggary on their wives and their posterity?'

'Ah! sir!' cries the serjeant, 'it is too late to think of those matters now. To be sure, my lady might have married one of the top gentlemen in the country: for she is certainly one of the best, as well as one of the handsomest women in the kingdom; and if she had been fairly dealt by, would have had a very great fortune into the bargain. Indeed she is worthy of the greatest prince in the world; and if I had been the greatest prince in the world, I should have thought myself happy with such a wife; but she was pleased to like the lieutenant, and certainly there can be no happiness in marriage without liking.'

'Looke, serjeant,' said the colonel, 'you know very well that I am the lieutenant's friend. I think I have shewn myself so.'

'Indeed, your honour hath,' quoth the serjeant, 'more than once, to my knowledge.'

'But I am angry with him for his imprudence, greatly angry with him for his imprudence; and the more so, as it affects a lady of so much worth.'

'She is, indeed, a lady of the highest worth,' cries the serjeant. 'Poor dear lady! I knew her, an't please your honour, from her infancy; and the sweetest-tempered, best-natured lady she is, that ever trod on English ground. I have always loved her as if she was my own sister.—Nay, she hath very often called me brother; and I have taken it to be

‘ a greater honour than if I was to be called a general officer.’

‘ What pity it is,’ said the colonel, ‘ that this worthy creature should be exposed to so much misery by the thoughtless behaviour of a man, who, though I am his friend, I cannot help saying, hath been guilty of imprudence, at least. Why could he not live upon his half-pay? what had he to do to run himself into debt in this outrageous manner?’

‘ I wish indeed,’ cries the serjeant, ‘ he had been a little more considerative; but, I hope, this will be a warning to him.’

‘ How am I sure of that,’ answered the colonel; ‘ or what reason is there to expect it? extravagance is a vice of which men are not so easily cured. I have thought a great deal of this matter, Mr. serjeant; and upon the most mature deliberation, I am of opinion, that it will be better both for him and his poor lady, that he should smart a little more.’

‘ Your honour, sir, to be sure is in the right,’ replied the serjeant; ‘ but yet, sir, if you will pardon me for speaking, I hope you will be pleased to consider my poor lady’s case. She suffers, all this while, as much or more than the lieutenant; for I know her so well, that I am certain she will never have a moment’s ease till her husband is out of confinement.’

‘ I know women better than you, serjeant,’ cries the colonel: ‘ they sometimes place their affections on a husband, as children do on their nurse; but they are both to be weaned. I know you, serjeant, to be a fellow of sense as well as spirit, or I should not speak so freely to you; but I took a fancy to you a long time ago, and I intend to serve you; but first, I ask you this question, is your attachment to Mr. Booth, or to his lady?’

‘ Certainly, sir,’ said the serjeant, ‘ I must love my lady best. Not but I have a great affection for the lieutenant too, because I know my lady hath the same; and, indeed, he hath been always very good to me, as far as was in his power. A lieutenant, your honour knows, can’t do a great deal; but

‘but I have always found him my friend upon all occasions.’

‘You say true,’ cries the colonel, ‘a lieutenant can do but little; but I can do much to serve you, and will too—But let me ask you one question—Who was the lady whom I saw last night with Mrs. Booth at her lodgings?’

Here the serjeant blushed, and repeated, ‘The lady, sir!’

‘Ay, a lady, a woman,’ cries the colonel, ‘who supped with us last night. She looked rather too much like a gentlewoman for the mistress of a lodging house.’

The serjeant’s cheeks glowed at this compliment to his wife, and he was just going to own her, when the colonel proceeded. ‘I think I never saw in my life so ill-looking, sly, demure a b——, I would give something, methinks, to know who she was.’

‘I don’t know, indeed,’ cries the serjeant in great confusion.—‘I know nothing about her.’

‘I wish you would enquire,’ said the colonel, ‘and let me know her name, and likewise what she is. I have a strange curiosity to know, and let me see you again this evening exactly at seven.’

‘And will not your honour then go to the lieutenant this morning?’ said Atkinson.

‘It is not in my power,’ answered the colonel; ‘I am engaged another way. Besides, there is no haste in this affair. If men will be imprudent, they must suffer the consequences. Come to me at seven, and bring me all the particulars you can concerning that ill-looking jade, I mentioned to you; for I am resolved to know who she is. And so, good-morrow to you, serjeant; be assured I will take an opportunity to do something for you.’

Though some readers may, perhaps, think the serjeant not unworthy of the freedom with which the colonel treated him, yet that haughty officer would have been very backward to have condescended to such familiarity with one of his rank, had he not proposed some design from it. In truth, he began to conceive hopes

hopes of making the serjeant instrumental to his design on Amelia; in other words, to convert him into a pimp; an office, in which the colonel had been served by Atkinson's betters; and which, as he knew it was in his power very well to reward him, he had no apprehension that the serjeant would decline: an opinion which the serjeant might have pardoned, though he had never given the least grounds for it, since the colonel borrowed it from the knowledge of his own heart. This dictated to him, that he, from a bad motive, was capable of desiring to debauch his friend's wife; and the same heart inspired him to hope that another, from another bad motive, might be guilty of the same breach of friendship, in assisting him. Few men, I believe, think better of others than of themselves; nor do they easily allow the existence of any virtue of which they perceive no traces in their own minds: for which reason I have observed, that it is extremely difficult to persuade a rogue that you are an honest man; nor would you ever succeed in the attempt by the strongest evidence, was it not for the comfortable conclusion which the rogue draws, that he who proves himself to be honest, proves himself to be a fool at the same time.

C H A P. IX.

A curious chapter, from which a curious reader may draw sundry observations.

THE serjeant retired from the colonel in a very dejected state of mind; in which, however, we must leave him a while, and return to Amelia; who, as soon as she was up, had dispatched Mrs. Atkinson to pay off her former lodgings, and to bring off all cloaths and other moveables.

The trusty messenger returned without performing her errand: for Mrs. Ellison had locked up all her rooms, and was gone out very early that morning, and the servant knew not whither she was gone.

The two ladies now sat down to breakfast, together with Amelia's two children; after which, Amelia declared:

clared she would take a coach and visit her husband. To this motion Mrs. Atkinson soon agreed, and offered to be her companion. To say truth, I think it was reasonable enough; and the great abhorrence which Booth had of seeing his wife in a bailiff's house, was, perhaps, rather too nice and delicate.

When the ladies were both dressed, and just going to send for their vehicle, a great knocking was heard at the door, and presently Mrs. James was ushered into the room.

This visit was disagreeable enough to Amelia, as it detained her from the sight of her husband, for which she so eagerly longed. However, as she had no doubt but that the visit would be reasonably short, she resolved to receive the lady with all the complaisance in her power.

Mrs. James now behaved herself so very unlike the person that she lately appeared, that it might have surprised any one who doth not know, that besides that of a fine lady, which is all mere art and mummery, every such woman hath some real character at the bottom, in which, whenever nature gets the better of her, she acts. Thus the finest ladies in the world will sometimes love, and sometimes scratch, according to their different natural dispositions, with great fury and violence, though both of these are equally inconsistent with a fine lady's artificial character.

Mrs. James then was at the bottom a very good-natured woman; and the moment she heard of Amelia's misfortune, was sincerely grieved at it. She had acquiesced on the very first motion with the colonel's design of inviting her to her house; and this morning at breakfast, when he had acquainted her that Amelia made some difficulty in accepting the offer, very readily undertook to go herself and persuade her friend to accept the invitation.

She now pressed this matter with such earnestness, that Amelia, who was not extremely versed in the art of denying, was hardly able to refuse her importunity; nothing, indeed, but her affection to Mrs. Atkinson could have prevailed on her to refuse; that point, however, she would not give up, and Mrs. James, at last,
was

was contented with a promise, that as soon as their affairs were settled, Amelia, with her husband and family, would make her a visit, and stay some time with her in the country, whither she was soon to retire.

Having obtained this promise, Mrs. James, after many very friendly professions, took her leave; and stepping into her coach, re-assumed the fine lady, and drove away to join her company at an auction.

The moment she was gone, Mrs. Atkinson, who had left the room upon the approach of Mrs. James, returned into it, and was informed by Amelia of all that had past.

‘Pray, madam,’ said Mrs. Atkinson, ‘do this colonel and his lady live, as it is called, well together?’

‘If you mean to ask,’ cries Amelia, ‘whether they are a very fond couple, I must answer that I believe they are not.’

‘I have been told,’ says Mrs. Atkinson, ‘that there have been instances of women who have become bawds to their own husbands, and the husbands pimps for them.’

‘Fie upon it,’ cries Amelia. ‘I hope there are no such people. Indeed, my dear, this is being a little too censorious.’

‘Call it what you please,’ answered Mrs. Atkinson, ‘it arises from my love to you, and my fears for your danger. You know the proverb of a burnt child; and if such a one hath any good-nature, it will dread the fire, on the account of others as well as on its own. And if I may speak my sentiments freely, I cannot think you will be in safety at this colonel’s house.’

‘I cannot but believe your apprehensions to be sincere,’ replied Amelia, ‘and I must think myself obliged to you for them; but I am convinced you are entirely in an error. I look on Colonel James as the most generous and best of men. He was a friend, and an excellent friend too, to my husband, long before I was acquainted with him, and he hath done him a thousand good offices. What do you say of his behaviour yesterday?’

‘I wish,’

‘I wish,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson, ‘that his behaviour to-day had been equal. What I am now going to undertake is the most disagreeable office of friendship, but it is a necessary one. I must tell you therefore what passed this morning between the colonel and Mr. Atkinson; for though it will hurt you, you ought, on many accounts, to know it.’ Here she related the whole which we have recorded in the preceding chapter, and with which the serjeant had acquainted her, while Mrs. James was paying her visit to Amelia. And as the serjeant had painted the matter rather in stronger colours than the colonel; so Mrs. Atkinson again, a little improved on the serjeant. Neither of these good people, perhaps, intended to aggravate any circumstance; but such is, I believe, the unavoidable consequence of all reports. Mrs. Atkinson, indeed, may be supposed not to see what related to James in the most favourable light, as the serjeant, with more honesty than prudence, had suggested to his wife, that the colonel had not the kindest opinion of her, and had called her a sly and demure—; it is true he omitted ill-looking b—; two words, which are, perhaps, superior to the patience of any Job in petticoats that ever lived. He made amends, however, by substituting some other phrases in their stead, not extremely agreeable to a female ear.

It appeared to Amelia, from Mrs. Atkinson’s relation, that the colonel had grossly abused Booth to the serjeant, and had absolutely refused to become his bail. Poor Amelia became a pale and motionless statue at this account. At length, she cried, ‘If this be true, I and mine are all, indeed, undone. We have no comfort, no hope, no friend left.—I cannot disbelieve you.—I know you would not deceive me?—Why should you, indeed, deceive me? But what can have caused this alteration since last night?—Did I say or do any thing to offend him?’

‘You said, and did rather, I believe, a great deal too much to please him,’ answered Mrs. Atkinson. ‘Besides, he is not in the least offended with you. On the contrary, he said many kind things’—

‘What can my poor love have done?’ said Amelia.

‘He

‘ He hath not seen the colonel since last night. Some villain hath set him against my husband ; he was once before suspicious of such a person. Some cruel monster hath belied his innocence.’

‘ Pardon me, dear madam,’ said Mrs. Atkinson ; ‘ I believe the person who hath injured the captain with this friend of his, is one of the worthiest and best of creatures—Nay, do not be surprised ; the person I mean, is even your fair self : sure you would not be so dull in any other case ; but in this, gratitude, humility, modesty, every virtue, shuts your eyes.’

Mortales hebitant visus,

‘ as Virgil says. What in the world can be more consistent, than his desire to have you at his own house ; and to keep your husband confined in another ? all that he said, and all that he did yesterday, and, what is more convincing to me than both, all that he looked last night, are very consistent with both these designs.’

‘ O Heaven !’ cries Amelia, ‘ you chill my blood with horror ! the idea freezes me to death : I can not, must not, will not think it. Nothing but conviction—Heaven forbid, I should ever have more conviction ! and did he abuse my husband ! what ! did he abuse a poor, unhappy, distressed creature ; oppress, ruined, torn from his children, torn away from his wretched wife ; the honestest, worthiest, noblest, tenderest, fondest, best !’—Here she burst into an agony of grief, which exceeds the power of description.

In this situation, Mrs. Atkinson was doing her utmost to support her, when a most violent knocking was heard at the door, and immediately the serjeant ran hastily into the room ; bringing with him a cordial, which presently relieved Amelia. What this cordial was, we shall inform the reader in due time. In the mean while, he must suspend his curiosity ; and the gentlemen at White’s may lay wagers, whether it was Ward’s pill, or Doctor James’s powder.

But before we close this chapter, and return back to the bailiff’s house, we must do our best to rescue the character.

character of our heroine from the dulness of apprehension, which several of our quicksighted readers may lay more heavily to her charge than was done by her friend Mrs. Atkinson.

I must inform, therefore, all such readers, that it is not, because innocence is more blind than guilt, that the former often overlooks and tumbles into the pit, which the latter foresees and avoids. The truth is, that it is almost impossible guilt should miss the discovering of all the snares in its way; as it is constantly prying closely into every corner, in order to lay snares for others. Whereas innocence, having no such purpose, walks fearlessly and carelessly through life; and is consequently liable to tread on the gins, which cunning has laid to entrap it. To speak plainly, and without allegory or figure, it is not want of sense, but want of suspicion, by which innocence is often betrayed. Again, we often admire at the folly of the dupe, when we should transfer our whole surprise to the astonishing guilt of the betrayer. In a word, many an innocent person hath owed his ruin to this circumstance alone, that the degree of villainy was such as must have exceeded the faith of every man who was not himself a villain.

C H A P. X.

In which are many profound secrets of philosophy.

BOOOTH, having had enough of the author's company the preceding day, chose now another companion. Indeed the author was not very solicitous of a second interview; for, as he could have no hope from Booth's pocket, so he was not likely to receive much increase to his vanity from Booth's conversation: for, low as this wretch was in virtue, sense, learning, birth and fortune, he was by no means low in his vanity. This passion, indeed, was so high in him, and at the same time so blinded him to his own demerits, that he hated every man, who did not either flatter him or give him money. In short, he claimed a strange kind of right; either to cheat all his acquaintance

quaintance of their praise, or to pick their pockets of their pence; in which latter case, he himself repaid very liberally with panegyric.

A very little specimen of such a fellow must have satisfied a man of Mr. Booth's temper. He chose, therefore, now to associate himself with that gentleman, of whom Bondum had given so shabby a character. In short, Mr. Booth's opinion of the bailiff was such, that he recommended a man most, where he least intended it. Nay, the bailiff, in the present instance, though he had drawn a malicious conclusion, honestly avowed, that this was drawn only from the poverty of the person; which is never, I believe, any forcible disrecommendation to a good mind: but he must have had a very bad mind, indeed, who, in Mr. Booth's circumstances, could have disliked or despised another man, because that other man was poor.

Some previous conversation having past between this gentleman and Booth, in which they had both opened their several situations to each other; the former casting an affectionate look on the latter, expressed great compassion for his circumstances; for which, Booth thanking him, said, 'You must have a great deal of compassion, and be a very good man, in such a terrible situation as you describe yourself, to have any pity to spare for other people.'

'My affairs, sir,' answered the gentleman, 'are very bad, it is true; and yet there is one circumstance, which makes you appear to me more the object of pity than I am to myself; and it is this, that you must from your years be a novice in affliction; whereas I have served a long apprenticeship to misery, and ought, by this time, to be a pretty good master of my trade. To say the truth, I believe, habit teaches men to bear the burthens of the mind, as it enures them to bear heavy burthens on their shoulders. Without use and experience, the strongest minds and bodies both will stagger under a weight, which habit might render easy, and even contemptible.'

'There

‘ There is great justice, cries Booth, in the comparison ; and, I think, I have myself experienced the truth of it : for I am not that Tyro in affliction, which you seem to apprehend me. And, perhaps, it is from the very habit you mention, that I am able to support my present misfortunes a little like a man.’

The gentleman smiled at this, and cried, ‘ Indeed captain, you are a young philosopher.’

‘ I think,’ cries Booth, ‘ I have some pretensions to that philosophy which is taught by misfortunes ; and you seem to be of opinion, sir, that it is one of the best schools of philosophy.’

‘ I mean no more, sir,’ said the gentleman, ‘ than that in the days of our affliction, we are inclined to think more seriously, than in those seasons of life, when we are engaged in the hurrying pursuits of business or pleasure, when we have neither leisure nor inclination to sift and examine things to the bottom. Now there are two considerations, which, from my having long fixed my thoughts upon them, have greatly supported me under all my afflictions. The one is the brevity of life, even at its longest duration, which the wisest of men hath compared to the short dimension of a span. One of the Roman poets compares it to the duration of a race ; and another, to the much shorter transition of a wave.

‘ The second consideration is the uncertainty of it. Short as its utmost limits are, it is far from being assured of reaching those limits. The next day, the next hour, the next moment, may be the end of our course. Now of what value is so uncertain, so precarious a station ? This consideration, indeed, however lightly it is passed over in our conception, doth in a great measure level all fortunes and conditions, and gives no man a right to triumph in the happiest state, or any reason to repine in the most miserable. Would the most worldly men see this in the light in which they examine all other matters, they would soon feel and acknowledge the force of this way of reasoning ; for which of them would give any price for an estate, from

' from which they were liable to be immediately
 ' ejected; or, would they not laugh at him as a mad-
 ' man, who accounted himself rich from such an uncer-
 ' tain possession! This is the fountain, sir, from which
 ' I have drawn my philosophy. Hence it is, that I have
 ' learnt to look on all those things, which are esteemed
 ' the blessings of life, and those which are dreaded as
 ' its evils, with such a degree of indifference, that as
 ' I should not be elated with possessing the former, so
 ' neither am I greatly dejected and depressed by suf-
 ' fering the latter. Is the actor esteemed happier, to
 ' whose lot it falls to play the principal part, than he
 ' who plays the lowest? and yet the drama may run
 ' twenty nights together, and by consequence may
 ' out-last our lives; but, at the best, life is only a
 ' little longer drama; and the business of the great
 ' stage is consequently a little more serious than that
 ' which is performed at the theatre royal. But even
 ' here, the catastrophes and calamities which are re-
 ' presented, are capable of affecting us. The wisest
 ' men can deceive themselves into feeling the distresses
 ' of a tragedy, though they know them to be merely
 ' imaginary; and the children will often lament them
 ' as realities: what wonder then, if these tragical
 ' scenes, which I allow to be a little more serious,
 ' should a little more affect us? where then is the re-
 ' medy, but in the philosophy I have mentioned;
 ' which, when once by a long course of meditation it
 ' is reduced to a habit, teaches us to set a just value on
 ' every thing; and cures at once all eager wishes and
 ' abject fears, all violent joy and grief concerning
 ' objects which cannot endure long, and may not exist
 ' a moment.'

' You have express yourself extremely well,' cries
 Booth, ' and I entirely agree with the justice of your
 ' sentiments; but, however true all this may be in
 ' theory, I still doubt its efficacy in practice. And
 ' the cause of the difference between these two is this;
 ' that we reason from our heads, but act from our
 ' hearts:

— *Video meliora, proboque:
 Deteriora sequor.*

' Nothing

' Nothing can differ more widely than wise men and fools, in their estimation of things ; but as both act from their uppermost passion, they both often act alike. What comfort then can your philosophy give to an avaricious man, who is deprived of his riches ; or to an ambitious man, who is stript of his power ? to the fond lover, who is torn from his mistress ; or, to the tender husband, who is dragged from his wife ? do you really think, that any meditations on the shortness of life will sooth them in their afflictions ? is not this very shortness itself one of their afflictions ? and if the evil they suffer be a temporary deprivation of what they love, will they not think their fate the harder, and lament the more, that they are to lose any part of an enjoyment, to which there is so short and so uncertain a period ?'

' I beg leave, sir,' said the gentleman ' to distinguish here. By philosophy, I do not mean the bare knowledge of right and wrong ; but an energy, a habit, as Aristotle calls it ; and this I do firmly believe, with him and with the stoics, is superior to all the attacks of fortune.'

He was proceeding, when the bailiff came in, and in a surely tone bade them both good-morrow ; after which, he asked the philosopher, if he was prepared to go to Newgate ; for that he must carry him thither that afternoon.

The poor man seemed very much shocked with this news. ' I hope,' cries he, ' you will give a little longer time, if not till the return of the writ. But I beg you, particularly, not to carry me thither to-day : for I expect my wife and children here in the evening.'

' I have nothing to do with wives and children,' cried the bailiff ; ' I never desire to see any wives and children here. I like no such company.'

' I intreat you,' said the prisoner, ' give me another day. I shall take it as a great obligation ; and you will disappoint me in the cruellest manner in the world, if you refuse me.'

' I can't help people's disappointments,' cries the bailiff ; ' I must consider myself and my own family.'

' I know

‘ I know not where I shall be paid the money that’s due already. I can’t afford to keep prisoners at my own expence.’

‘ I don’t intend it shall be at your expence,’ cries the philosopher; ‘ my wife is gone to raise money this morning, and I hope to pay you all I owe you at her arrival. But we intend to sup together to-night at your house; and if you should remove me now, it would be the most barbarous disappointment to us both, and will make me the most miserable man alive.’

‘ Nay, for my part,’ said the bailiff, ‘ I don’t desire to do any thing barbarous. I know how to treat gentlemen with civility as well as another. And when people pay as they go, and spend their money like gentlemen, I am sure nobody can accuse me of any incivility since I have been in the office. And if you intend to be merry to night, I am not the man that will prevent it—Though I say it, you may have as good a supper drest here as at any tavern in town.’

‘ Since Mr. Bondum is so kind, captain,’ said the philosopher, ‘ I hope for the favour of your company. I assure you, if it ever be my fortune to go abroad into the world, I shall be proud of the honour of your acquaintance.’

‘ Indeed, sir,’ cries Booth, ‘ it is an honour I shall be very ready to accept; but as for this evening, I cannot help saying, I hope to be engaged in another place.’

‘ I promise you, sir,’ answered the other, ‘ I shall rejoice at your liberty, though I am a loser by it.’

‘ Why, as to that matter,’ cries Bondum with a sneer, ‘ I fancy, captain, you may engage yourself to the gentleman without any fear of breaking your word: for I am very much mistaken, if we part to-day.’

‘ Pardon me, my good friend,’ said Booth, ‘ but I expect my bail every minute.’

‘ Lookee, sir, cries Bondum, ‘ I don’t love to see gentlemen in an error. I shall not take the serjeant’s bail; and as for the colonel, I have been
‘ with

‘ with him myself this morning ; (for to be sure I love to do all I can for gentlemen) ; and he told me, he could not possibly be here to-day : besides, why should I mince the matter ? there is more stuff in the office.’

‘ What do you mean by stuff ?’ cries Booth.

‘ I mean that there is another writ,’ answered the bailiff, ‘ at the suit of Mrs. Ellifon, the gentlewoman that was here yesterday ; and the attorney that was with her, is concerned against you. Some officers would not tell you all this ; but I loves to shew civility to gentlemen, while they behave themselves as such. And I loves the gentlemen of the army in particular. I had like to have been in the army myself once ; but I liked the commission I have better. Come, captain, let not your noble courage be cast down ; what say you to a glass of white wine, or a tiff of punch, by way of whet ?’

‘ I have told you, sir, I never drink in the morning,’ cries Booth a little peevishly.

‘ No offence, I hope, sir,’ said the bailiff. ‘ I hope I have not treated you with any incivility. I don’t ask any gentleman to call for liquor in my house, if he doth not chuse it ; nor I don’t desire any body to stay here longer than they have a mind to ?—Newgate, to be sure, is the place for all debtors that can’t find bail. I knows what civility is, and I scorn to behave myself unbecoming a gentleman ; but I’d have you consider that the twenty-four hours appointed by act of parliament are almost out ; and so it is time to think of removing. As to bail, I would not have you flatter yourself : for I knows very well there are other things coming against you. Besides, the sum you are already charged with is very large, and I must see you in a place of safety. My house is no prison, though I lock up for a little time in it. Indeed, when gentlemen are gentlemen, and likely to find bail, I don’t stand for a day or two ; but I have a good nose at a bit of carrion, captain ; I have not carried so much carrion to Newgate, without knowing the smell of it.’

‘ I understand not your cant,’ cries Booth ; ‘ but I did not think to have offended you so much by refusing to drink in a morning.’

‘ Offended me, sir,’ cries the bailiff. ‘ Who told you so? do you think, sir, if I want a glass of wine, I am under any necessity of asking my prisoners for it? damn it, sir, I’ll shew you, I scorn your words ; I can afford to treat you with a glass of the best wine in England, if you comes to that’—He then pulled out a handful of guineas, saying, ‘ There, sir, they are all my own ; I owe no body a shilling. I am no beggar, nor no debtor. I am the king’s officer, as well as you, and I will spend guinea for guinea as long as you please.’

‘ Harkee, rascal,’ cries Booth, laying hold of the bailiff’s collar. ‘ How dare you treat me with this insolence? doth the law give you any authority to insult me in my misfortunes?’ At which words he gave the bailiff a good shove, and threw him from him.

‘ Very well, sir,’ cries the bailiff, ‘ I will swear both an assault and an attempt to a rescue. If officers are to be used in this manner, there is an end of all law and justice. But though I am not a match for you myself, I have those below that are.’ He then ran to the door, and called up two ill-looking fellows, his followers, whom, as soon as they entered the room, he ordered to seize on Booth, declaring he would immediately carry him to Newgate ; at the same time pouring out a vast quantity of abuse, below the dignity of history to record.

Booth desired the two dirty fellows to stand off, and declared he would make no resistance, at the same time bidding the bailiff carry him wherever he durst.

‘ I’ll shew you what I dare,’ cries the bailiff ; and again ordered the followers to lay hold of their prisoner, saying, ‘ He has assaulted me already, and endeavour’d a rescue. I shan’t trust such a fellow to walk at liberty. A gentleman, indeed! ay, ay, Newgate is the properest place for such gentry ; as arrant carrion as ever was carried thither.’

The fellows then both laid violent hands on Booth, and the bailiff stepped to the door to order a coach; when on a sudden, the whole scene was changed in an instant: for now the serjeant came running, out of breath, into the room; and seeing his friend, the captain, roughly handled by two ill-looking fellows, without asking any questions, stepped briskly up to his assistance, and instantly gave one of the assailants so violent a salute with his fist, that he directly measured his length on the floor.

Booth having by this means his right arm at liberty was unwilling to be idle, or entirely to owe his rescue from both the ruffians to the serjeant; he therefore imitated the example which his friend had set him, and with a lusty blow levelled the other follower with his companion on the ground.

The bailiff roared out, 'A rescue, a rescue;' to which the serjeant answered, 'There was no rescue intended. 'The captain,' said he, 'wants no rescue. 'Here are some friends coming who will deliver him 'in a better manner.'

The bailiff swore heartily he would carry him to Newgate, in spite of all the friends in the world.

'You carry him to Newgate!' cried the serjeant, with the highest indignation. 'Offer but to lay your hands on him, and I will knock your teeth down your ugly jaws.'—Then turning to Booth, he cried, 'They will be all here within a minute, sir; we had much ado to keep my lady from coming herself; but she is at home in good health, longing to see your honour; and I hope you will be with her within this half hour.'

And now three gentlemen entered the room; these were an attorney, the person whom the serjeant had procured in the morning to be his bail with Colonel James, and lastly, Doctor Harrison himself.

The bailiff no sooner saw the attorney, with whom he was well acquainted (for the others he knew not) than he began, as the phrase is, to pull in his horns, and ordered the two followers, who were now got again on their legs, to walk down stairs.

‘ So, captain,’ says the doctor, ‘ when last we parted, I believe we neither of us expected to meet in such a place as this.’

‘ Indeed, doctor,’ cries Booth, ‘ I did not expect to have been sent hither by the gentleman who did me that favour.’

‘ How so, sir?’ said the doctor, ‘ you was sent hither by some person, I suppose, to whom you was indebted. This is the usual place, I apprehend, for creditors to send their debtors to. But you ought to be more surprised that the gentleman who sent you hither is come to release you.—Mr. Murphy, you will perform all the necessary ceremonials.’

The attorney then asked the bailiff with how many actions Booth was charged, and was informed there were five besides the doctor’s, which was much the heaviest of all. Proper bonds were presently provided, and the doctor and the serjeant’s friend signed them; the bailiff, at the instance of the attorney, making no objection to the bail.

Booth, we may be assured, made a handsome speech to the doctor for such extraordinary friendship, with which, however, we do not think proper to trouble the reader; and now every thing being ended, and the company ready to depart, the bailiff stepped up to Booth, and told him he hoped he would remember civility money.

‘ I believe,’ cries Booth, ‘ you mean incivility money; if there be any fees due for rudeness, I must own you have a very just claim.’

‘ I am sure, sir,’ cries the bailiff, ‘ I have treated your honour with all the respect in the world: no man, I am sure, can charge me with using a gentleman rudely. I know what belongs to a gentleman better; but you can’t deny that two of my men have been knocked down; and I doubt not but, as you are a gentleman, you will give them something to drink.’

Booth was about to answer with some passion, when the attorney interfered, and whispered in his ear, that it was usual to make a compliment to the officer, and that he had better comply with the custom.

‘ If the fellow had treated me civilly,’ answered Booth, ‘ I should have had no objection to comply with a bad custom in his favour ; but I am resolved, I will never reward a man for using me ill, and I will not agree to give him a single farthing.’

‘ ’Tis very well, sir,’ said the bailiff, ‘ I am rightly served for my good-nature ; but if it had been to do again, I would have taken care you should not have been bailed this day.’

Doctor Harrison, to whom Booth referred the cause, after giving him a succinct account of what had past, declared the captain to be in the right. He said it was a most horrid imposition, that such fellows were ever suffered to prey on the necessitous ; but that the example would be much worse to reward them where they had behaved themselves ill. ‘ And I think,’ says he, ‘ the bailiff is worthy of great rebuke for what he hath just now said ; in which I hope he hath boasted of more power than is in him. We do, indeed, with great justice and propriety, value ourselves on our freedom, if the liberty of the subject depends on the pleasure of such fellows as these.’

‘ It is not so neither altogether,’ cries the lawyer : ‘ But custom hath established a present or fee to them at the delivery of a prisoner, which they call civility money, and expect as in a manner their due, though in reality they have no right.’

‘ But will any man,’ cries Doctor Harrison, ‘ after what the captain hath told us, say that the bailiff hath behaved himself as he ought ; and if he had, is he to be rewarded for not acting in an unchristian and inhuman manner ? it is pity, that instead of a custom of seeing them out of the pockets of the poor and wretched, when they do not behave themselves ill, there was not both a law and a practice to punish them severely when they do. In the present case, I am so far from agreeing to give the bailiff a shilling, that, if there be any method of punishing him for his rudeness, I shall be heartily glad to see it put in execution : for there are none whose conduct should be so strictly watched as that of these necessary evils in the society, as their office concern

‘ for the most part those poor creatures who cannot do themselves justice, and as they are generally the worst of men who undertake it.’

The bailiff then quitted the room, muttering that he should know better what to do another time ; and shortly after Booth and his friends left the house ; but as they were going out, the author took Doctor Harrison aside, and slipped a receipt into his hand, which the doctor returned, saying he never subscribed when he neither knew the work nor the author ; but that if he would call at his lodgings, he would be very willing to give all the encouragement to merit which was in his power.

The author took down the doctor’s name and direction, and made him as many bows as he would have done had he carried off the half guinea, for which he had been signing.

Mr. Booth then took his leave of the philosopher, and departed with the rest of his friends.

A M E L I A.

BOOK IX.

CHAP. I.

In which the history looks backwards.

BEFORE we proceed farther with our history, it may be proper to look back a little, in order to account for the late conduct of Doctor Harrison; which however inconsistent it may have hitherto appeared, when examined to the bottom, will be found, I apprehend, to be truly congruous with all the rules of the most perfect prudence, as well as with the most consummate goodness.

We have already partly seen in what light Booth had been represented to the doctor abroad. Indeed, the accounts which were sent of the captain, as well by the curate as by a gentleman of the neighbourhood, were much grosser and more to his disadvantage, than the doctor was pleased to set them forth in his letter to the person accused. What sense he had of Booth's conduct, was, however, manifest by that letter. Nevertheless he resolved to suspend his final judgment till his return; and though he censured him, would not absolutely condemn him without ocular demonstration.

The doctor, on his return to his parish, found all the accusations which had been transmitted to him, confirmed by many witnesses, of which the curate's wife, who had been formerly a friend to Amelia, and still preserved the outward appearance of friendship,

was the strongest. She introduced all with, 'I am sorry to say it; and it is friendship which bids me speak; and it is for their good it should be told you;' after which beginnings, she never concluded a single speech without some horrid slander and bitter invective.

Besides the malicious turn which was given to these affairs in the country, which were owing a good deal to misfortune, and some little perhaps to imprudence, the whole neighbourhood rung with several gross and scandalous lies, which were merely the inventions of his enemies, and of which the scene was laid in London since his absence.

Poisoned with all this malice, the doctor came to town, and learning where Booth lodged, went to make him a visit. Indeed, it was the doctor, and no other, who had been at his lodgings that evening when Booth and Amelia were walking in the Park; and concerning which the reader may be pleased to remember so many strange and odd conjectures.

Here the doctor saw the little gold watch, and all those fine trinkets with which the noble lord had presented the children; and which, from the answers given him by the poor ignorant innocent girl, he could have no doubt had been purchased within a few days by Amelia.

This account tallied so well with the ideas he had imbibed of Booth's extravagance in the country, that he firmly believed both the husband and wife to be the vainest, filliest, and most unjust people alive. It was, indeed, almost incredible, that two rational beings should be guilty of such absurdity; but monstrous and absurd as it was, ocular demonstration appeared to be the evidence against them.

The doctor departed from their lodgings enraged at this supposed discovery, and unhappily for Booth, was engaged to supper that very evening with the country gentleman of whom Booth had rented a farm. As the poor captain happened to be the subject of conversation, and occasioned their comparing notes, the account which the doctor gave of what he had seen that evening, so incensed the gentleman to whom Booth

was

was likewise a debtor, that he vowed he would take a writ out against him the next morning, and have his body alive or dead. And the doctor was at last persuaded to do the same. Mr. Murphy was thereupon immediately sent for, and the doctor in his presence repeated again what he had seen at his lodgings, as the foundation of his suing him, which the attorney, as we have before seen, had blabbed to Atkinson.

But no sooner did the doctor hear that Booth was arrested, than the wretched condition of his wife and family began to affect his mind. The children, who were to be utterly undone with their father, were intirely innocent; and as for Amelia herself, though he thought he had most convincing proofs of very blameable levity; yet his former friendship and affection to her were busy to invent every excuse, till, by very heavily-loading the husband, they lightened the suspicion against the wife.

In this temper of mind, he resolved to pay Amelia a second visit, and was on his way to Mrs. Ellison, when the serjeant met him, and made himself known to him. The doctor took his old servant into a coffee-house, where he received from him such an account of Booth and his family, that he desired the serjeant to shew him presently to Amelia; and this was the cordial which we mentioned at the end of the ninth chapter of the preceding book.

The doctor became soon satisfied concerning the trinkets which had given him so much uneasiness, and which had brought so much mischief on the head of poor Booth. Amelia likewise gave the doctor some satisfaction as to what he had heard of her husband's behaviour in the country; and assured him, upon her honour, that Booth could so well answer every complaint against his conduct, that she had no doubt but that a man of the doctor's justice and candour would entirely acquit him, and would consider him as an innocent unfortunate man, who was the object of a good man's compassion, not of his anger or resentment.

This worthy clergyman, who was not desirous of finding proofs to condemn the captain, or to justify

his own vindictive proceedings, but, on the contrary, rejoiced heartily in every piece of evidence which tended to clear the character of his friend, gave a ready ear to all which Amelia said. To this, indeed, he was induced by the love he always had for that lady, by the good opinion he entertained of her, as well as by pity for her present condition, than which nothing appeared more miserable ; for he found her in the highest agonies of grief and despair, with her two little children crying over their wretched mother. These are, indeed, to a well-disposed mind, the most tragical sights that human nature can furnish, and afford a juster motive to grief and tears in the beholder, than it would be to see all the heroes who have ever infested the earth, hanged all together in a string.

The doctor felt this sight as he ought. He immediately endeavoured to comfort the afflicted ; in which he so well succeeded, that he restored to Amelia sufficient spirits to give him the satisfaction we have mentioned : after which, he declared he would go and release her husband ; which he accordingly did, in the manner we have above related.

C H A P. II.

In which the history goes forward.

WE now return to that period of our history, to which we had brought it at the end of our last book.

Booth and his friends arrived from the bailiff's, at the serjeant's lodgings, where Booth immediately ran up stairs to his Amelia ; between whom I shall not attempt to describe the meeting. Nothing certainly was ever more tender or more joyful. This however I will observe, that a very few of these exquisite moments, of which the best minds only are capable, do, in reality, over-balance the longest enjoyments which can ever fall to the lot of the worst.

Whilst Booth and his wife were feasting their souls with the most delicious mutual endearments, the doctor was fallen to play with the two little children be-

low

low stairs. While he was thus engaged, the little boy did somewhat amiss; upon which, the doctor said, 'If you do so any more, I will take your papa away from you again'—'Again, sir,' said the child, 'why, was it you then that took away my papa before?' 'Suppose it was,' said the doctor, 'would not you forgive me?' 'Yes,' cries the child, 'I would forgive you; because a christian must forgive every body; but I should hate you as long as I live.'

The doctor was so pleased with the boy's answer, that he caught him in his arms, and kissed him, at which time, Booth and his wife returned. The doctor asked which of them was their son's instructor in his religion: Booth answered, that he must confess Amelia had all the merit of that kind. 'I should have rather thought he had learnt of his father,' cries the doctor, 'for he seems a good soldier-like christian, and professes to hate his enemies with a very good grace.'

'How, Billy,' cries Amelia, 'I am sure I did not teach you so.'

'I did not say I would hate my enemies, madam,' cries the boy. 'I only said I would hate papa's enemies; sure, mamma, there is no harm in that: nay, I am sure there is no harm in it; for I have heard you say the same thing a thousand times.'

The doctor smiled on the child, and chucking him under the chin, told him, he must hate nobody: and now Mrs. Atkinson, who had provided a dinner for them all, desired them to walk up, and partake of it.

And now it was that Booth was first made acquainted with the serjeant's marriage; as was Dr. Harrison, both of whom greatly felicitated him upon it.

Mrs. Atkinson, who was, perhaps, a little more confounded than she would have been had she married a colonel, said, 'If I have done wrong, Mrs. Booth is to answer for it; for she made the match: indeed, Mr. Atkinson, you are greatly obliged to the character which this lady gives of you.' 'I hope he will deserve it,' said the doctor; 'and if the

‘ army hath not corrupted a good boy, I believe I
‘ may answer for him.’

While our little company were enjoying that happiness which never fails to attend conversation where all present are pleased with each other, a visitant arrived, who was, perhaps, not very welcome to any of them. This was no other than Colonel James, who entering the room with much gaiety, went directly up to Booth, embraced him, and expressed great satisfaction at finding him there; he then made an apology for not attending him in the morning, which he said had been impossible; and that he had with the utmost difficulty put off some business of great consequence, in order to serve him this afternoon; ‘ but
‘ I am glad on your account,’ cried he to Booth,
‘ that my presence was not necessary.’

Booth himself was extremely satisfied with this declaration, and failed not to return him as many thanks as he would have deserved, had he performed his promise; but the two ladies were not quite so well satisfied. As for the serjeant, he had slipped out of the room when the colonel entered, not entirely out of that bashfulness which we have remarked him to be tainted with; but, indeed, from what had past in the morning, he hated the sight of the colonel, as well on the account of his wife as on that of his friend.

The doctor, on the contrary, on what he had formerly heard from both Amelia and her husband of the colonel’s generosity and friendship, had built so good an opinion of him, that he was very much pleased with seeing him, and took the first opportunity of telling him so. ‘ Colonel,’ said the doctor, ‘ I have not the
‘ happiness of being known to you; but I have long
‘ been desirous of an acquaintance with a gentleman,
‘ in whose commendation I have heard so much from
‘ some present.’ The colonel made a proper answer to this compliment, and they soon entered into a familiar conversation together: for the doctor was not difficult of access; indeed, he held the strange reserve, which is usually practised in this nation between people who are in any degree strangers to each other, to be very unbecoming the christian character.

The

The two ladies soon left the room; and the remainder of the visit, which was not very long, past in discourse on various common subjects, not worth recording. In the conclusion, the colonel invited Booth and his lady, and the doctor, to dine with him the next day.

To give Colonel James his due commendation, he had shewn a great command of himself, and great presence of mind on this occasion: for, to speak the plain truth, the visit was intended to Amelia alone; nor did he expect, or, perhaps, desire, any thing less than to find the captain at home. The great joy which he suddenly conveyed into his countenance at the unexpected sight of his friend, is to be attributed to that noble art which is taught in those excellent schools called the several courts of Europe. By this men are enabled to dress out their countenances as much at their own pleasure, as they do their bodies; and to put on friendship with as much ease as they can a laced coat.

When the colonel and doctor were gone, Booth acquainted Amelia with the invitation he had received. She was so struck with the news, and betrayed such visible marks of confusion and uneasiness, that they could not have escaped Booth's observation, had suspicion given him the least hint to remark: but this, indeed, is the great optic glass helping us to discern plainly almost all that passes in the minds of others, without some use of which nothing is more purblind than human nature.

Amelia having recovered from her first perturbation, answered, 'My dear, I will dine with you wherever you please to lay your commands on me.'—'I am obliged to you, my dear soul,' cries Booth, 'your obedience shall be very easy; for my command will be, that you shall always follow your own inclinations.' 'My inclinations,' answered she, 'would, I am afraid, be too unreasonable a confinement to you; for they would always lead me to be with you and your children, with at most a single friend or two, now and then.' 'O my dear,' replied he, 'large companies give us a greater relish for our own society when we return
' to

‘to it; and we shall be extremely merry, for Doctor Harrison dines with us.’ ‘I hope you will, my dear,’ cries she; ‘but I own I should have been better pleased to have enjoyed a few days with yourself and the children, with no other person but Mrs. Atkinson, for whom I have conceived a violent affection, and who would have given us but little interruption. However, if you have promised, I must undergo the penance.’ ‘Nay, child,’ cried he, ‘I am sure I would have refused, could I have guessed it had been in the least disagreeable to you; though I know your objection’—‘Objection!’ cries Amelia eagerly, ‘I have no objection!’ ‘Nay, nay,’ said he, ‘come, be honest, I know your objection, though you are unwilling to own it.’ ‘Good Heavens!’ cried Amelia, frightened, ‘what do you mean? what objection?’ ‘Why,’ answered he, ‘to the company of Mrs. James; and I must confess she hath not behaved to you lately as you might have expected; but you ought to pass all that by, for the sake of her husband, to whom we have both so many obligations; who is the worthiest, honestest, and most generous fellow in the universe, and the best friend to me that ever man had.’

Amelia, who had far other suspicions, and began to fear that her husband had discovered them, was highly pleased, when she saw him taking a wrong scent. She gave, therefore, a little into the deceit, and acknowledged the truth of what he had mentioned; but said, that the pleasure she should have in complying with his desires, would highly recompense any dissatisfaction which might arise on any other account; and shortly after ended the conversation on this subject, with her chearfully promising to fulfil his promise.

In reality, poor Amelia had now a most unpleasant task to undertake; for she thought it absolutely necessary to conceal from her husband the opinion she had conceived of the colonel. For, as she knew the characters, as well of her husband as of his friend, or rather enemy (both being often synonymous in the language of the world) she had the utmost reason to apprehend

apprehend something very fatal might attend her husband's entertaining the same thought of James, which filled and tormented her own breast.

And, as she knew that nothing but these thoughts could justify the least unkind, or, indeed, the least reserved behaviour to James, who had, in all appearance, conferred the greatest obligations upon Booth and herself, she was reduced to a dilemma, the most dreadful that can attend a virtuous woman, as it often gives the highest triumph, and sometimes no little advantage to the men of professed gallantry.

In short, to avoid giving any umbrage to her husband, Amelia was forced to act in a manner, which she was conscious must give encouragement to the colonel: a situation which, perhaps, requires as great prudence and delicacy, as any in which the heroic part of the female character can be exerted.

C H A P. III.

A conversation between Dr. Harrison and others.

THE next day, Booth and his lady, with the doctor, met at Colonel James's, where Colonel Bath likewise made one of the company.

Nothing very remarkable passed at dinner, or till the ladies withdrew. During this time, however, the behaviour of Colonel James was such as gave some uneasiness to Amelia, who well understood his meaning, tho' the particulars were too refined and subtle to be observed by any other present.

When the ladies were gone, which was as soon as Amelia could prevail on Mrs. James to depart, Colonel Bath, who had been pretty brisk with Champagne at dinner, soon began to display his magnanimity. 'My brother tells me, young gentleman,' said he to Booth, 'that you have been used very ill lately by some rascals; and I have no doubt but you will do yourself justice.'

Booth answered, that he did not know what he meant. 'Since I must mention it then,' cries the colonel, 'I hear you have been arrested; and I think
you

‘ you know what satisfaction is to be required by a man of honour.’

‘ I beg, sir,’ says the doctor, ‘ no more may be mentioned of that matter. I am convinced no satisfaction will be required of the captain, till he is able to give it.’

‘ I do not understand what you mean by able,’ cries the colonel.—To which the doctor answered, that it was of too tender a nature to speak more of.

‘ Give me your hand, doctor,’ cries the colonel; ‘ I see you are a man of honour, though you wear a gown. It is, as you say, a matter of a tender nature. Nothing, indeed, is so tender as a man’s honour. Curse my liver, if any man; I mean, that is, if any gentleman, was to arrest me—I would as surely cut his throat as——’

‘ How, sir!’ said the doctor. ‘ Would you compensate one breach of the law by a much greater, and pay your debts by committing murder?’

‘ Why do you mention law between gentlemen?’ says the colonel. ‘ A man of honour wears his law by his side. And can the resentment of an affront make a gentleman guilty of murder? and what greater affront can one man cast upon another, than by arresting him? I am convinced, that he who would put up an arrest, would put up a slap in the face.’

Here the colonel looked extremely fierce, and the divine stared with astonishment at this doctrine; when Booth, who well knew the impossibility of opposing the colonel’s humour with success, began to play with it; and having first conveyed a private wink to the doctor, he said, there might be cases undoubtedly where such an affront ought to be resented; but that there were others, where any resentment was impracticable: ‘ As for instance,’ said he, ‘ where the man is arrested by a woman.’

‘ I could not be supposed to mean that case,’ cries the colonel; ‘ and you are convinced I did not mean it.’

‘ To put an end to this discourse at once, sir,’ said the

the doctor, 'I was the plaintiff, at whose suit this gentleman was arrested.'

'Was you so, sir!' cries the colonel; 'then I have no more to say. Women and the clergy are upon the same footing. The long-robed gentry are exempted from the laws of honour.'

'I do not thank you for that exemption, sir,' cries the doctor; 'and if honour and fighting are, as they seem to be, synonymous words with you, I believe there are some clergymen, who, in defence of their religion, or their country, or their friend, the only justifiable causes of fighting, except bare self-defence, would fight as bravely as yourself, colonel; and that without being paid for it.'

'Sir, you are privileged,' says the colonel with great dignity; 'and you have my leave to say what you please. I respect your order, and you cannot offend me.'

'I will not offend you, colonel,' cries the doctor; 'and our order is very much obliged to you, since you profess so much respect to us, and pay none to our master.'

'What master, sir!' said the colonel.

'That Master,' answered the doctor, 'who hath expressly forbidden all that cutting of throats, to which you discover so much inclination.'

'O, your servant, sir,' said the colonel, 'I see what you are driving at; but you shall not persuade me to think, that religion forces me to be a coward.'

'I detest and despise the name as much as you can,' cries the doctor; 'but you have a wrong idea of the word, colonel. What were all the Greeks and Romans? were these cowards; and yet, did you ever hear of this butchery, which we call duelling, among them?'

'Yes, indeed, have I,' cries the colonel. 'What else is all Mr. Pope's Homer full of, but duels? Did not, what's his name, one of the Agamemnons, fight with that paultry rascal Paris? and Diomedes with, what d'ye call him there; and Hector with, I forget his name, he that was Achilles's bosom friend; and afterwards with Achilles himself? Nay, and in
' Dryden's

‘ Dryden’s Virgil, is there any thing almost besides fighting?’

‘ You are a man of learning, colonel,’ cries the doctor, ‘ but—

‘ I thank you for that compliment,’ said the colonel — ‘ No, sir, I do not pretend to learning; but I have some little reading, and I am not ashamed to own it.’

‘ But are you sure, colonel,’ cries the doctor, ‘ that you have not made a small mistake? for I am apt to believe, both Mr. Pope and Mr. Dryden (tho’ I cannot say I ever read a word of either of them) speak of wars between nations, and not of private duels: for of the later, I do not remember one single instance in all the Greek and Roman story. In short, it is a modern custom, introduced by barbarous nations since the times of Christianity; tho’ it is a direct and audacious defiance of the christian law, and is consequently much more sinful in us, than it would have been in the heathens.’

‘ Drink about, doctor,’ cries the colonel, ‘ and let us call a new cause: for I perceive we shall never agree on this. You are a churchman, and I don’t expect you to speak your mind.’

‘ We are both of the same church, I hope,’ cries the doctor.

‘ I am of the church of England, sir,’ answered the colonel, ‘ and will fight for it to the last drop of my blood.’

‘ It is very generous in you, colonel,’ cries the doctor, ‘ to fight so zealously for a religion by which you are to be damned.’

‘ It is well for you, doctor,’ cries the colonel, ‘ that you wear a gown: for, by all the dignity of a man, if any other person had said the words you have just uttered, I would have made him eat them — Ay, d—n me, and my sword into the bargain.’

Booth began to be apprehensive, that this dispute might grow too warm; in which case he feared that the colonel’s honour, together with the Champagne, might hurry him so far, as to forget the respect due, and which he professed to pay, to the sacerdotal robe.

robe. Booth, therefore, interposed between the disputants, and said, that the colonel had very rightly proposed to call a new subject; for that it was impossible to reconcile accepting a challenge with the Christian religion, or refusing it with the modern notion of honour. 'And you must allow it, doctor,' said he, 'to be a very hard injunction for a man to become infamous; and more especially for a soldier, who is to lose his bread into the bargain.'

'Ay, sir,' says the colonel with an air of triumph, 'What say you to that?'

'Why, I say,' cries the doctor, 'that it is much harder to be damned on the other side.'

'That may be,' said the colonel; 'but damn me, if I would take an affront of any man breathing for all that. And yet I believe myself to be as good a christian as wears a head. My maxim is, Never to give an affront, nor ever to take one; and I say, that is the maxim of a good christian; and no man shall ever persuade me to the contrary.'

'Well, sir,' said the doctor, 'since that is your resolution, I hope no man will ever give you an affront.'

'I am obliged to you for your hope, doctor,' cries the colonel with a sneer; 'and he that doth, will be obliged to you for lending him your gown: for, by the dignity of a man, nothing out of petticoats, I believe, dares affront me.'

Colonel James had not hitherto joined in the discourse. In truth, his thoughts had been otherwise employed; nor is it very difficult for the reader to guess what had been the subject of them. Being waked, however, from his reverie, and having heard the two or three last speeches, he turned to his brother, and asked him, why he would introduce such a topic of conversation before a gentleman of Dr. Harrison's character?

'Brother, cried Bath, 'I own it was wrong, and I ask the doctor's pardon; I know not how it happened to arise: for you know, brother, I am not used to talk of these matters. They are generally poltroons that do. I think I need not be beholden

to

‘ to my tongue to declare I am none. I have shewn
 ‘ myself in a line of battle. I believe there is no man
 ‘ will deny that ; I believe I may say, no man dares
 ‘ deny, that I have done my duty’——

The colonel was thus proceeding to prove that his
 prowess was neither the subject of his discourse, nor
 the object of his vanity, when a servant entered, and
 summoned the company to tea with the ladies ; a sum-
 mons which colonel James instantly obeyed, and was
 followed by all the rest.

But as the tea-table conversation, though extremely
 delightful to those who are engaged in it, may prob-
 ably appear somewhat dull to the reader, we will
 here put an end to the chapter.

C H A P. IV.

A dialogue between Booth and Amelia.

THE next morning early, Booth went by ap-
 pointment and waited on Colonel James ;
 whence he returned to Amelia, in that kind of dis-
 position which the great master of human passions
 would describe in Andromache, when he tells us she
 cried and smiled at the same instant.

Amelia plainly perceived the discomposure of his
 mind, in which the opposite affections of joy and grief
 were struggling for the superiority, and begged to
 know the occasion ; upon which Booth spoke as fol-
 lows :

‘ My dear, said he, ‘ I had no intention to conceal
 ‘ from you what hath past this morning between me
 ‘ and the colonel, who hath oppressed me, if I may
 ‘ use that expression, with obligations. Sure never
 ‘ man had such a friend ; for never was there so noble,
 ‘ so generous a heart—I cannot help this ebullition of
 ‘ gratitude, I really cannot.’—Here he paused a mo-
 ment, and wiped his eyes, and then proceeded : ‘ You
 ‘ know, my dear, how gloomy the prospect was yef-
 ‘ terday before our eyes, how inevitable ruin stared
 ‘ me in the face ; and the dreadful idea of having en-
 ‘ tailed beggary on my Amelia and her posterity
 ‘ racked

‘ racked my mind: For, though by the goodness of
‘ the doctor I had regained my liberty, the debt yet
‘ remained; and if that worthy man had a design of
‘ forgiving me his share, this must have been my
‘ utmost hope; and the condition in which I must still
‘ have found myself need not to be expatiated on.
‘ In what light then shall I see, in what words shall I
‘ relate, the colonel’s kindness! O, my dear Amelia,
‘ he hath removed the whole gloom at once, hath
‘ driven all despair out of my mind, and hath filled it
‘ with the most sanguine, and, at the same time, the
‘ most reasonable hopes of making a comfortable pro-
‘ vision for yourself and my dear children. In the first
‘ place, then, he will advance me a sum of money to
‘ pay off all my debts; and this on a bond to be re-
‘ paid only when I shall become colonel of a regiment,
‘ and not before. In the next place, he is gone this
‘ very morning to ask a company for me, which is
‘ now vacant in the West-Indies; and as he intends
‘ to push this with all his interest, neither he nor I
‘ have any doubt of his success. Now, my dear, comes
‘ the third, which, though perhaps it ought to give
‘ me the greatest joy, such is, I own, the weak-
‘ ness of my nature, it rends my very heart-strings
‘ asunder.—I cannot mention it: for I know it will
‘ give you equal pain—though I know on all proper
‘ occasions you can exert a manly resolution.—You
‘ will not, I am convinced, oppose it, whatever you
‘ must suffer in complying——O, my dear Amelia, I
‘ must suffer likewise; yet I have resolved to bear
‘ it—You know not what my poor heart hath suffered
‘ since he made the proposal—It is love for you alone
‘ which could persuade me to submit to it—Consider
‘ our situation; consider that of our children; reflect
‘ but on those poor babes, whose future happiness is
‘ at stake, and it must arm your resolution. It is your
‘ interest and theirs that reconciled me to a proposal,
‘ which, when the colonel first made it, struck me with
‘ the utmost horror: he hath, indeed, from these mo-
‘ tives, persuaded me into a resolution, which I thought
‘ impossible for any one to have persuaded me into—
‘ O, my dear Amelia, let me intreat you to give me
‘ up

‘ up to the good of your children ; as I have promised
‘ the colonel to give you up to their interest and your
‘ own. If you refuse these terms, we are still undone ;
‘ for he insists absolutely upon them—Think then,
‘ my love, however hard they may be, necessity com-
‘ pels us to submit to them. I know in what light a
‘ woman, who loves like you, must consider such a
‘ proposal ; and yet how many instances have you of
‘ women, who, from the same motives, have sub-
‘ mitted to the same !’

‘ What can you mean, Mr. Booth ?’ cries Amelia
trembling.

‘ Need I explain my meaning to you more ?’ an-
swered Booth.—‘ Did I not say, I must give up my
‘ Amelia ?’

‘ Give me up !’ said she.

‘ For a time only, I mean,’ answered he ; ‘ for a
‘ short time perhaps. The colonel himself will take
‘ care it shall not be long—for I know his heart ; I
‘ shall scarce have more joy in receiving you back,
‘ than he will have in restoring you to my arms. In
‘ the mean time, he will not only be a father to my
‘ children, but a husband to you.’

‘ A husband to me !’ said Amelia.

‘ Yes, my dear ; a kind, a fond, a tender, an af-
‘ fectionate husband. If I had not the most certain
‘ assurances of this, doth my Amelia think I could
‘ be prevailed on to leave her ?—No, my Amelia,
‘ he is the only man on earth who could have pre-
‘ vailed on me ; but I know his house, his purse, his
‘ protection, will be all at your command—And as
‘ for any dislike you have conceived to his wife, let
‘ not that be any objection : for I am convinced he
‘ will not suffer her to insult you ; besides, she is ex-
‘ tremely well-bred, and how much soever she may
‘ hate you in her heart, she will at least treat you
‘ with civility.

‘ Nay, the invitation is not his, but her’s ; and I
‘ am convinced they will both behave to you with the
‘ greatest friendship : his I am sure will be sincere, as
‘ to the wife of a friend entrusted to his care ; and
‘ her’s will, from good breeding, have not only the
‘ appearances,

‘appearances, but the effects, of the truest friendship.’

‘I understand you, my dear, at last,’ said she, (indeed she had rambled into very strange conceits from some parts of his discourse) ‘and I will give you my resolution in a word—I will do the duty of a wife; and that is, to attend her husband wherever he goes.’

Booth attempted to reason with her, but all to no purpose. She gave, indeed, a quiet hearing to all he said, and even to those parts which most displeased her ears; I mean, those in which he exaggerated the great goodness and disinterested generosity of his friend: but her resolution remained inflexible, and resisted the force of all his arguments with a steadiness of opposition, which it would have been almost excusable in him to have construed into stubbornness.

The doctor arrived in the midst of the dispute; and, having heard the merits of the cause on both sides, delivered his opinion in the following words:

‘I have always thought it, my dear children, a matter of the utmost nicety, to interfere in any differences between husband and wife; but, since you both desire me, with such earnestness, to give you my sentiments on the present contest between you, I will give you my thoughts as well as I am able. In the first place then, can any thing be more reasonable, than for a wife to desire to attend her husband? It is, as my favourite child observes, no more than a desire to do her duty; and I make no doubt but that is one great reason of her insisting on it. And how can you yourself oppose it? Can love be its own enemy; or can a husband, who is fond of his wife, content himself almost on any account with a long absence from her?’

‘You speak like an angel, my dear doctor Harrison,’ answered Amelia; ‘I am sure, if he loved as tenderly as I do, he could on no account submit to it.’

‘Pardon me, child,’ cries the doctor, ‘there are some reasons, which would not only justify his leaving

‘leaving you, but which must force him, if he hath any real love for you, joined with common sense, to make that election. If it was necessary, for instance, either to your good, or to the good of your children, he would not deserve the name of a man, I am sure not that of a husband, if he hesitated a moment. Nay, in that case, I am convinced, you yourself would be an advocate for what you now oppose. I fancy therefore I mistook him, when I apprehended he said, that the colonel made his leaving you behind as the condition of getting him the commission: for I know my dear child hath too much goodness, and too much sense, and too much resolution, to prefer any temporary indulgence of her own passions to the solid advantages of her whole family.’

‘There, my dear,’ cries Booth, ‘I knew what opinion the doctor would be of. Nay, I am certain, there is not a wise man in the kingdom who would say otherwise.’

‘Don’t abuse me, young gentleman,’ said the doctor, ‘with appellations I don’t deserve.’

‘I abuse you, my dear doctor!’ cries Booth.

‘Yes my dear sir,’ answered the doctor; ‘you insinuated silyly that I was wise, which, as the world understands the phrase, I should be ashamed of; and my comfort is, that no one can accuse me justly of it; I have just given an instance of the contrary, by throwing away my advice.’

‘I hope, sir,’ cries Booth, ‘that will not be the case.’

‘Yes, sir,’ answered the doctor, ‘I know it will be the case in the present instance; for either you will not go at all, or my little turtle here will go with you.’

‘You are in the right, doctor,’ cries Amelia.

‘I am sorry for it,’ said the doctor; ‘for then I assure you, you are in the wrong.’

‘Indeed,’ cries Amelia, ‘if you knew all my reasons, you would say they were very strong ones.’

‘Very

‘ Very probably,’ cries the doctor—‘ The knowledge that they are in the wrong, is a very strong reason to some women to continue so.’

‘ Nay, doctor,’ cries Amelia, ‘ you shall never persuade me of that. I will not believe that any human being ever did an action merely because they knew it to be wrong.’

‘ I am obliged to you, my dear child,’ said the doctor, ‘ for declaring your resolution of not being persuaded. Your husband would never call me a wife man again, if, after that declaration, I should attempt to persuade you.’

‘ Well, I must be content,’ cries Amelia, ‘ to let you think as you please.’

‘ That is very gracious, indeed,’ said the doctor. ‘ Surely, in a country where the church suffers others to think as they please, it would be very hard if they had not themselves the same liberty. And yet, as unreasonable as the power of controuling men’s thoughts is represented, I will shew you how you shall controul mine, whenever you desire it.’

‘ How, pray?’ cries Amelia, ‘ I should greatly esteem that power.’

‘ Why, whenever you act like a wise woman,’ cries the doctor, ‘ you will force me to think you so; and, whenever you are pleased to act as you do now, I shall be obliged, whether I will or no, to think as I do now.’

‘ Nay, dear doctor,’ cries Booth, ‘ I am convinced my Amelia will never do any thing to forfeit your good opinion. Consider but the cruel hardship of what she is to undergo, and you will make allowances for the difficulty she makes in complying. To say the truth, when I examine my own heart, I have more obligations to her than appear at first sight; for, by obliging me to find arguments to persuade her, she hath assisted me in conquering myself. Indeed, if she had shewn more resolution, I should have shewn less.’

‘ So you think it necessary then,’ said the doctor, ‘ that there should be one fool at least in every married couple. A mighty resolution truly! and well

‘ worth your valuing yourself upon, to part with your
 ‘ wife for a few months, in order to make the for-
 ‘ tune of her and your children. When you are to
 ‘ leave her too in the care and protection of a friend
 ‘ that gives credit to the old stories of friendship, and
 ‘ doth an honour to human nature. What, in the
 ‘ name of goodness, do either of you think that you
 ‘ have made an union to endure for ever? How will
 ‘ either of you bear that separation which must some
 ‘ time or other, and perhaps very soon, be the lot of
 ‘ one of you? Have you forgot that you are both
 ‘ mortal?—As for Christianity, I see you have re-
 ‘ signed all pretensions to it: for I make no doubt,
 ‘ but that you have so set your hearts on the happiness
 ‘ you enjoy here together, that neither of you ever
 ‘ think a word of hereafter.’

Amelia now burst into tears; upon which Booth begged the doctor to proceed no further. Indeed, he would not have wanted the caution: for, however blunt he appeared in his discourse, he had a tenderness of heart which is rarely found among men; for which I know no other reason, than that true goodness is rarely found among them: for I am firmly persuaded, that the latter never possessed any human mind in any degree, without being attended by as large a portion of the former.

Thus ended the conversation on this subject; what followed is not worth relating till the doctor carried off Booth with him to take a walk in the Park.

C H A P. V.

A conversation between Amelia and doctor Harrison, with the result.

A M E L I A being left alone, began to consider seriously of her condition; she saw it would be very difficult to resist the importunities of her husband, backed by the authority of the doctor; especially as she well knew how unreasonable her declaration must appear to every one who was ignorant of her real motives to persevere in it. On the other hand, she was
 fully

fully determined, whatever might be the consequence, to adhere firmly to her resolution of not accepting the colonel's invitation.

When she had turned the matter every way in her mind, and vexed and tormented herself with much uneasy reflexion upon it, a thought at last occurred to her, which immediately brought her some comfort. This was, to make a confident of the doctor, and to impart to him the whole truth. This method, indeed, appeared to her now to be so adviseable, that she wondered she had not hit upon it sooner; but it is the nature of despair to blind us all to the means of safety, however easy and apparent they may be.

Having fixed her purpose in her mind, she wrote a short note to the doctor, in which she acquainted him that she had something of great moment to impart to him, which must be an entire secret from her husband, and begged that she might have an opportunity of communicating it as soon as possible.

Doctor Harrison received the letter that afternoon, and immediately complied with Amelia's request in visiting her. He found her drinking tea with her husband and Mrs. Atkinson, and sat down and joined the company.

Soon after the removal of the tea-table, Mrs. Atkinson left the room. The doctor then turning to Booth; said, 'I hope, captain, you have a true sense of the obedience due to the church, though our clergy do not often exact it. However, it is proper to exercise our power sometimes, in order to remind the laity of their duty. I must tell you therefore, that I have some private business with your wife; and I expect your immediate absence.'

'Upon my word, doctor,' answered Booth, 'no popish confessor, I firmly believe, ever pronounced his will and pleasure with more gravity and dignity; none therefore was ever more immediately obeyed than you shall be.' Booth then quitted the room, and desired the doctor to recall him when his business with the lady was over.

Doctor Harrison promised he would, and then turning to Amelia, he said, 'Thus far, madam, I

‘ have obeyed your commands, and am now ready to receive the important secret which you mention in your note.’

Amelia now informed her friend of all she knew, all she had seen and heard, and all that she suspected of the colonel. The good man seemed greatly shocked at the relation, and remained in a silent astonishment. Upon which, Amelia said, ‘ Is villany so rare a thing, sir, that it should so much surprise you ? ’ ‘ No child,’ cries he ; ‘ but I am shocked at seeing it so artfully disguised under the appearance of so much virtue. And to confess the truth, I believe my own vanity is a little hurt in having been so grossly imposed upon. Indeed, I had a very high regard for this man ; for, besides the great character given him by your husband, and the many facts I have heard so much redounding to his honour, he hath the fairest and most promising appearance I have ever yet beheld—A good face, they say, is a letter of recommendation. O nature, nature, why art thou so dishonest, as ever to send men with these false recommendations into the world ! ’

‘ Indeed, my dear sir, I begin to grow entirely sick of it,’ cries Amelia : ‘ For sure all mankind almost are villains in their hearts.’

‘ Fie, child,’ cries the doctor. ‘ Do not make a conclusion so much to the dishonour of the great Creator. The nature of man is far from being in itself evil : it abounds with benevolence, charity, and pity, coveting praise and honour, and shunning shame and disgrace. Bad education, bad habits, and bad customs, debauch our nature, and drive it headlong as it were into vice. The governors of the world, and I am afraid the priesthood, are answerable for the badness of it. Instead of discouraging wickedness to the utmost of their power, both are apt to connive at it. In the great sin of adultery for instance ; hath the government provided any law to punish it ; or doth the priest take any care to correct it ? on the contrary, is the most notorious practice of it any detriment to a man’s fortune, or to his reputation in the world ? doth it exclude him

‘ from

‘ from any preferment in the state, I had almost said, in the church? is it any blot in his escutcheon? any bar to his honour? is he not to be found every day in the assemblies of women of the highest quality? in the closets of the greatest men, and even at the tables of bishops? What wonder then, if the community in general treat this monstrous crime as matter of jest, and that men give way to the temptations of a violent appetite, when the indulgence of it is protected by law, and countenanced by custom? I am convinced there are good stamina in the nature of this very man: for he hath done acts of friendship and generosity to your husband, before he could have any evil design on your chastity; and in a christian society, which I no more esteem this nation to be, than I do any part of Turkey, I doubt not but this very colonel would have made a worthy and valuable member.’

‘ Indeed, my dear sir,’ cries Amelia, ‘ you are the wisest as well as best man in the world——’

‘ Not a word of my wisdom,’ cries the doctor. ‘ I have not a grain—I am not the least versed in the Chrematistic* art, as an old friend of mine calls it. I know not how to get a shilling, nor how to keep it in my pocket, if I had it.’

‘ But you understand human nature to the bottom,’ answered Amelia; ‘ and your mind is the treasury of all ancient and modern learning.’

‘ You are a little flatterer,’ cries the doctor; ‘ but I dislike you not for it. And to shew you I don’t, I will return your flattery; and tell you, you have acted with great prudence in concealing this affair from your husband; but you have drawn me into a scrape; for I have promised to dine with this fellow again to-morrow; and you have made it impossible for me to keep my word.’

‘ Nay but, dear sir,’ cries Amelia, ‘ for Heaven’s sake, take care. If you shew any kind of disrespect to the colonel, my husband may be led into some suspicion—especially after our conference.’

* The art of getting wealth is so called by Aristotle in his Politics.

‘ Fear nothing, child. I will give him no hint; and that I may be certain of not doing it, I will stay away. You do not think, I hope, that I will join in a cheerful conversation with such a man; that I will so far betray my character as to give any countenance to such flagitious proceedings. Besides, my promise was only conditional; and I do not know whether I could otherwise have kept it: for I expect an old friend every day, who comes to town twenty miles on foot to see me; whom I shall not part with on any account: for, as he is very poor, he may imagine I treat him with disrespect.’

‘ Well, sir,’ cries Amelia, ‘ I must admire you, and love you for your goodness.’

‘ Must you love me?’ cries the doctor. ‘ I could cure you now in a minute, if I pleased.’

‘ Indeed, I defy you, sir,’ said Amelia.

‘ If I could but persuade you,’ answered he, ‘ that I thought you not handsome, away would vanish all ideas of goodness in an instant. Confess honestly, would they not?’

‘ Perhaps I might blame the goodness of your eyes,’ replied Amelia; ‘ and that is perhaps an honest confession than you expected. But do, pray, sir, be serious; and give me your advice what to do. Consider the difficult game I have to play: for I am sure, after what I have told you, you would not even suffer me to remain under the roof of this colonel.’

‘ No, indeed, would I not,’ said the doctor, ‘ whilst I have a house of my own to entertain you.’

‘ But how to dissuade my husband,’ continued she, ‘ without giving him any suspicion of the real cause, the consequences of his guessing at which, I tremble to think upon.’

‘ I will consult my pillow upon it,’ said the doctor, ‘ and in the morning you shall see me again. In the mean time be comforted, and compose the perturbations of your mind.’

‘ Well, sir,’ said she, ‘ I put my whole trust in you.’

‘ I am

‘ I am sorry to hear it,’ cries the doctor. ‘ Your innocence may give you a very confident trust in a much more powerful assistance. However, I will do all I can to serve you; and now, if you please, we will call back your husband: for, upon my word, he hath shewn a good catholic patience. And where is the honest serjeant and his wife? I am pleased with the behaviour of you both to that worthy fellow, in opposition to the custom of the world; which, instead of being formed on the precepts of our religion, to consider each other as brethren, teaches us to regard those who are a degree below us, either in rank or fortune, as a species of beings of an inferior order in the creation.’

The captain now returned into the room, as did the serjeant and Mrs Atkinson; and the two couple, with the doctor, spent the evening together in great mirth and festivity; for the doctor was one of the best companions in the world; and a vein of chearfulness, good-humour and pleasantry, ran through his conversation, with which it was impossible to resist being pleased.

C H A P. VI.

Containing as surprising an accident as is perhaps recorded in history.

BOOTH had acquainted the serjeant with the great goodness of Colonel James, and with the chearful prospects which he entertained from it. This Atkinson behind the curtain communicated to his wife. The conclusions which she drew from it, need scarce be hinted to the reader. She made, indeed, no scruple of plainly and bluntly telling her husband that the colonel had a most manifest intention to attack the chastity of Amelia.

This thought gave the poor serjeant great uneasiness, and after having kept him long awake, tormented him in his sleep with a most horrid dream, in which he imagined that he saw the colonel standing by the bed-side of Amelia, with a naked sword in his hand,

and threatening to stab her instantly, unless she complied with his desires. Upon this, the serjeant started up in his bed, and catching his wife by the throat, cried out, 'D—n you, put up your sword this instant, and leave the room, or by Heaven I'll drive mine to your heart's blood.'

This rough treatment immediately roused Mrs. Atkinson from her sleep, who no sooner perceived the position of her husband, and felt his hand grasping her throat, than she gave a violent shriek, and presently fell into a fit.

Atkinson now waked likewise, and soon became sensible of the violent agitations of his wife. He immediately leapt out of bed, and running for a bottle of water, began to sprinkle her very plentifully; but all to no purpose, she neither spoke, nor gave any symptoms of recovery. Atkinson then began to roar aloud; upon which, Booth, who lay under him, jumpt from his bed, and ran up with the lighted candle in his hand. The serjeant had no sooner taken the candle, than he ran with it to the bed-side. Here he beheld a sight which almost deprived him of his senses. The bed appeared to be all over blood; and his wife weltering in the midst of it. Upon this, the serjeant, almost in a frenzy, cried out, 'O Heavens! I have killed my wife. I have stabbed her. I have stabbed her.'——'What can be the meaning of all this?' said Booth.—'O fir,' cries the serjeant, 'I dreamt I was rescuing your lady from the hands of Colonel James, and I have killed my poor wife.—' Here he threw himself upon the bed by her, caught her in his arms, and behaved like one frantic with despair.

By this time, Amelia had throw on a wrapping gown, and was come up into the room, where the serjeant and his wife were lying on the bed, and Booth standing like a motionless statue by the bed-side. Amelia had some difficulty to conquer the effects of her own surprise on this occasion; for a more ghastly and horrible sight than the bed presented, could not be conceived.

Amelia

Amelia sent Booth to call up the maid of the house, in order to lend her assistance; but, before his return, Mrs. Atkinson began to come to herself; and soon after, to the inexpressible joy of the serjeant, it was discovered she had no wound. Indeed, the delicate nose of Amelia soon made that discovery, which the grosser smell of the serjeant, and perhaps his fright, had prevented him from making: for now it appeared that the red liquor with which the bed was stained, though it may, perhaps, sometimes run through the veins of a fine lady, was not what is properly called blood; but was, indeed, no other than cherry brandy, a bottle of which Mrs. Atkinson always kept in her room to be ready for immediate use; and to which she used to apply for comfort in all her afflictions. This the poor serjeant, in his extreme hurry, had mistaken for a bottle of water. Matters were now soon accommodated; and no other mischief appeared to be done, unless to the bed-cloaths. Amelia and Booth returned back to their room; and Mrs. Atkinson rose from her bed, in order to equip it with a pair of clean sheets.

And thus this adventure would have ended without producing any kind of consequence, had not the words, which the serjeant uttered in his frenzy, made some slight impression on Booth: so much, at least, as to awaken his curiosity; so that in the morning when he awoke, he sent for the serjeant, and desired to hear the particulars of this dream, since Amelia was concerned in it.

The serjeant, at first, seemed unwilling to comply, and endeavoured to make excuses. This, perhaps, increased Booth's curiosity, and he said, 'Nay, I am resolved to hear it. Why, you simpleton, do you imagine me weak enough to be affected by a dream, however terrible it may be?'

'Nay, sir,' cries the serjeant, 'as for that matter, dreams have sometimes fallen out to be true.—One of my own, I know, did so, concerning your honour: for when you courted my young lady, I dreamt you was married to her; and yet it was at a time when neither I myself, nor any of the
country,

‘country, thought you would ever obtain her.
‘But, Heaven forbid this dream should ever come to
‘pass.’

‘Why, what was this dream?’ cries Booth. ‘I
‘insist on knowing.’

‘To be sure, sir,’ cries the serjeant, ‘I must not
‘refuse you; but, I hope, you will never think any
‘more of it. Why then, sir, I dreamt that your ho-
‘nour was gone to the West-Indies, and had left
‘my lady in the care of Colonel James; and last
‘night, I dreamt the colonel came to my lady’s bed-
‘side, offering to ravish her; and with a drawn sword
‘in his hand, threatening to stab her that moment,
‘unless she would comply with his desires. How I
‘came to be by, I know not; but, I dreamt, I rushed
‘upon him, caught him by the throat, and swore I
‘would put him to death, unless he instantly left the
‘room.—Here I waked, and this was my dream.
‘I never paid any regard to a dream in my life—
‘but, indeed, I never dreamt any thing so very plain
‘as this. It appeared downright reality. I am sure,
‘I have left the marks of my fingers in my wife’s
‘throat. I would not have taken an hundred pound
‘to have used her so.’

‘Faith,’ cries Booth, ‘it was an odd dream—and
‘not so easily to be accounted for, as that you had
‘formerly of my marriage; for as Shakespear says,
‘*Dreams denote a foregone conclusion*. Now it is im-
‘possible you should ever have thought of any such
‘matter as this.’

‘However, sir,’ cries the serjeant, ‘it is in your
‘honour’s power to prevent any possibility of this
‘dream’s coming to pass, by not leaving my lady to
‘the care of the colonel: if you must go from her,
‘certainly there are other places where she may be
‘with great safety; and since my wife tells me that
‘my lady is so very unwilling, whatever reasons she
‘may have, I hope your honour will oblige her.’

‘Now I recollect it,’ cries Booth, ‘Mrs. Atkinson
‘hath once or twice dropt some disrespectful words
‘of the colonel. He hath done something to disoblige
‘her.’

‘He

‘He hath, indeed sir,’ replied the serjeant: ‘He hath said that of her which she doth not deserve, and for which, if he had been my superior officer, I would have cut both his ears off.—Nay, for that matter, he can speak ill of other people besides her.’

‘Do you know, Atkinson,’ cries Booth, very gravely, ‘that you are talking of the dearest friend I have?’

‘To be honest then,’ answered the serjeant, ‘I do not think so. If I did, I should love him much better than I do.’

‘I must and will have this explained,’ cries Booth. ‘I have too good an opinion of you, Atkinson, to think you would drop such things as you have, without some reason—and I will know it.’

‘I am sorry I have dropt a word,’ cries Atkinson. ‘I am sure, I did not intend it; and your honour hath drawn it from me unawares.’

‘Indeed, Atkinson,’ cries Booth, ‘you have made me very uneasy, and I must be satisfied.’

‘Then, sir,’ said the serjeant, ‘you shall give me your word of honour; or I will be cut into ten thousand pieces before I will mention another syllable.’

‘What shall I promise?’ said Booth.

‘That you will not resent any thing I shall lay to the colonel,’ answered Atkinson.

‘Resent!—Well, I give you my honour,’ said Booth.

The serjeant made him bind himself over and over again; and then related to him the scene which formerly past between the colonel and himself, as far as concerned Booth himself; but concealed all that more immediately related to Amelia.

‘Atkinson,’ cries Booth, ‘I cannot be angry with you; for I know you love me, and I have many obligations to you; but you have done wrong in censuring the colonel for what he said of me. I deserve all that he said; and his censures proceeded from his friendship.’

‘ But it was not so kind, sir,’ said Atkinson, ‘ to say such things to me who am but a serjeant, and at such a time too.’

‘ I will hear no more,’ cries Booth. ‘ Be assured, you are the only man I would forgive on this occasion; and I forgive you only on condition you never speak a word more of this nature.—This silly dream hath intoxicated you.’

‘ I have done, sir,’ cries the serjeant. ‘ I know my distance, and whom I am to obey; but I have one favour to beg of your honour, never to mention a word of what I have said to my lady; for I know she never would forgive me; I know she never would, by what my wife hath told me. Besides, you need not mention it, sir, to my lady; for she knows it already, and a great deal more.’

Booth presently parted from the serjeant, having desired him to close his lips on this occasion, and repaired to his wife, to whom he related the serjeant’s dream.

Amelia turned as white as snow, and fell into so violent a trembling, that Booth plainly perceived her emotion, and immediately partook of it himself.—‘ Sure, my dear,’ said he, staring wildly, ‘ there is more in this than I know. A silly dream could not so discompose you. I beg you, I intreat you to tell me—hath ever Colonel James’—

At the very mention of the colonel’s name, Amelia fell on her knees, and begged her husband not to frighten her.

‘ What do I say, my dear love,’ cried Booth, ‘ that can frighten you?’

‘ Nothing, my dear,’ said she.—‘ But my spirits are so discomposed with the dreadful scene I saw last night, that a dream, which at another time, I should have laughed at, hath shocked me. Do but promise me that you will not leave me behind you, and I am easy?’

‘ You may be so,’ cries Booth; ‘ for I will never deny you any thing.—But make me easy too. I must know if you have seen any thing in Colonel James to displease you.’

‘ Why

‘ Why should you suspect it?’ cries Amelia.

‘ You torment me to death,’ cries Booth. ‘ By Heavens! I will know the truth. Hath he ever said or done any thing which you dislike?’

‘ How, my dear,’ said Amelia, ‘ can you imagine I should dislike a man, who is so much your friend? Think of all the obligations you have to him, and then you may easily resolve yourself. Do you think, because I refuse to stay behind you in his house, that I have any objection to him?—No, my dear, had he done a thousand times more than he hath, was he an angel instead of a man, I would not quit my Billy.—There’s the fore, my dear; there’s the misery, to be left by you.’

Booth embraced her with the most passionate raptures, and looking on her with inexpressible tenderness, cried—‘ Upon my soul, I am not worthy of you.—I am a fool, and yet you cannot blame me.—If the stupid miser hoards, with such care, his worthless treasure; if he watches it with such anxiety; if every apprehension of another’s sharing the least part, fills his soul with such agonies; O Amelia! what must be my condition, what terrors must I feel, while I am watching over a jewel of such real, such inestimable worth?’

‘ I can, with great truth, return the compliment,’ cries Amelia. ‘ I have my treasure too; and am so much a miser, that no force shall ever tear me from it.’

‘ I am ashamed of my folly,’ cries Booth; ‘ and yet it is all from extreme tenderness. Nay, you yourself are the occasion.—Why will you ever attempt to keep a secret from me? do you think I should have resented to my friend his just censure of my conduct?’—

‘ What censure, my dear love?’ cries Amelia.

‘ Nay, the serjeant hath told me all,’ cries Booth. —Nay, and that he hath told it to you—Poor soul! thou couldst not endure to hear me accused, though never so justly, and by so good a friend. Indeed, my dear, I have discovered the cause of that resentment to the colonel, which you could not hide from
‘ me.—

‘ me.—I love you, I adore you for it. Indeed, I
 ‘ could not forgive a slighting word on you.—But
 ‘ why do I compare things so unlike? what the colo-
 ‘ nel said of me was just and true; every reflexion on
 ‘ my Amelia must be false and villainous.’

The discernment of Amelia was extremely quick; and she now perceived what had happened, and how much her husband knew of the truth. She resolved therefore to humour him, and fell severely on Colonel James for what he had said to the serjeant, which Booth endeavoured all he could to soften; and thus ended this affair, which had brought Booth to the very brink of a discovery, which must have given him the highest torment, if it had not produced any of those tragical effects which Amelia apprehended.

C H A P. VII.

In which the author appears to be master of that profound learning called The Knowledge of the Town.

MR S. James now came to pay a morning’s visit to Amelia. She entered the room with her usual gaiety, and after a slight preface, addressing herself to Booth, said, she had been quarrelling with her husband on his account. ‘ I know not,’ said she, ‘ what he means by thinking of sending you the lord knows whither. I have insisted on his asking something for you nearer home. And it would be the hardest thing in the world, if he should not obtain it. Are we resolved never to encourage merit; but to throw away all our preferments on those who do not deserve them? what a set of contemptible wretches do we see strutting about the town in scarlet!’

Booth made a very low bow, and modestly spoke in disparagement of himself. To which she answered, ‘ Indeed, Mr. Booth, you have merit. I have heard it from my brother, who is a judge of those matters; and I am sure cannot be suspected of flattery. He is your friend as well as myself; and we
 ‘ will

‘ will never let Mr. James rest till he hath got you a
‘ commission in England.’

Booth bowed again, and was offering to speak, but she interrupted him, saying, ‘ I will have no thanks,
‘ nor no fine speeches. If I can do you any service, I
‘ shall think I am only paying the debt of friendship
‘ to my dear Mrs. Booth.’

Amelia, who had long since forgot the dislike she had taken to Mrs. James at her first seeing her in town, had attributed it to the right cause, and had begun to resume her former friendship for her, expressed very warm sentiments of gratitude on this occasion. She told Mrs. James, she should be eternally obliged to her if she could succeed in her kind endeavours; for that the thoughts of parting again with her husband had given her the utmost concern. ‘ Indeed,’ added she, ‘ I cannot help saying, he hath some merit in
‘ the service: for he hath received two dreadful
‘ wounds in it, one of which very greatly endangered
‘ his life; and I am convinced, if his pretensions were
‘ backed with any interest, he would not fail of suc-
‘ cess.’

‘ They shall be backed with interest,’ cries Mrs. James, ‘ if my husband hath any. He hath no fa-
‘ vour to ask for himself, nor for any other friend
‘ that I know of; and indeed, to grant a man his just
‘ due, ought hardly to be thought a favour. Resume
‘ your old gaiety, therefore, my dear Emily. Lord!
‘ I remember the time when you was much the gayer
‘ creature of the two. But you make an arrant mope
‘ of yourself, by confining yourself at home. One
‘ never meets you any where. Come, you shall go
‘ with me to the lady Betty Castleton’s.’

‘ Indeed, you must excuse me, my dear,’ answered Amelia, ‘ I do not know Lady Betty.’

‘ Not know Lady Betty! how is that possible?—
‘ But no matter, I will introduce you—She keeps a
‘ morning rout; hardly a rout, indeed; a little bit
‘ of a drum—only four or five tables—Come, take
‘ your capuchine; you positively shall go—Booth,
‘ you shall go with us too. Though you are with your
‘ wife, another woman will keep you in countenance.’

‘ La!

‘La! child,’ cries Amelia, ‘how you rattle!’

‘I am in spirits,’ answered Mrs. James, ‘this morning: for I won four rubbers together last night; and betted the things, and won almost every bet. I am in luck, and we will contrive to be partners—Come.’

‘Nay, child, you shall not refuse Mrs. James,’ said Booth.

‘I have scarce seen my children to-day,’ answered Amelia. ‘Besides, I mortally detest cards.’

‘Detest cards!’ cries Mrs. James. ‘How can you be so stupid? I would not live a day without them—Nay, indeed, I do not believe I should be able to exist. Is there so delightful a sight in the world, as the four honours in one’s own hand, unless it be three natural aces at bragg—And you really hate cards!’

‘Upon reflexion,’ cries Amelia, ‘I have sometimes had great pleasure in them—in seeing my children build houses with them. My little boy is so dexterous, that he will sometimes build up the whole pack.’

‘Indeed, Booth,’ cries Mrs. James, ‘this good woman of yours is strangely altered since I knew her first; but she will always be a good creature.’

‘Upon my word, my dear,’ cries Amelia, ‘you are altered too very greatly; but I doubt not to live to see you alter again, when you come to have as many children as I have.’

‘Children!’ cries Mrs. James, ‘you make me shudder. How can you envy me the only circumstance which makes matrimony comfortable?’

‘Indeed, my dear,’ said Amelia, ‘you injure me: for I envy no woman’s happiness in marriage.’ At these words, such looks passed between Booth and his wife, as, to a sensible by-stander, would have made all the airs of Mrs. James appear in the highest degree contemptible, and would have rendered herself the object of compassion. Nor could that lady avoid looking a little silly on the occasion.

Amelia now, at the earnest desire of her husband, accoutred herself to attend her friend; but first she insisted

sisted on visiting her children, to whom she gave several hearty kisses, and then recommending them to the care of Mrs. Atkinson, she and her husband accompanied Mrs. James to the rout; where few of my fine readers will be displeased to make part of the company.

The two ladies and Booth then entered an apartment beset with card-tables, like the rooms at Bath and Tunbridge. Mrs. James immediately introduced her friends to Lady Betty; who received them very civilly, and presently engaged Booth and Mrs. James in a party at whist; for, as to Amelia, she so much declined playing, that, as the party could be filled without her, she was permitted to sit by.

And now, who should make his appearance but the noble peer, of whom so much honourable mention hath already been made in this history. He walked directly up to Amelia, and addressed her with as perfect a confidence, as if he had not been in the least conscious of having in any manner displeased her; though the reader will hardly suppose that Mrs. Ellison had kept any thing a secret from him.

Amelia was not, however, so forgetful. She made him a very distant curtesy, would scarce vouchsafe an answer to any thing he said; and took the first opportunity of shifting her chair, and retiring from him.

Her behaviour, indeed, was such, that the peer plainly perceived, that he should get no advantage by pursuing her any farther at present. Instead, therefore, of attempting to follow her, he turned on his heel, and addressed his discourse to another lady; though he could not avoid often casting his eyes towards Amelia as long as she remained in the room.

Fortune, which seems to have been generally no great friend to Mr. Booth, gave him no extraordinary marks of her favour at play. He lost two full rubbers, which cost him five guineas; after which Amelia, who was uneasy at his lordship's presence, begged him in a whisper to return home; with which request he directly complied.

Nothing, I think, remarkable happened to Booth, unless the renewal of his acquaintance with an officer whom

whom he had known abroad, and who made one of his party at the whist-table.

The name of this gentleman, with whom the reader will hereafter be better acquainted, was Trent. He had formerly been in the same regiment with Booth, and there was some intimacy between them. Captain Trent expressed great delight in meeting his brother officer, and both mutually promised to visit each other.

The scenes which had past the preceding night and that morning had so confused Amelia's thoughts, that, in the hurry in which she was carried off by Mrs. James, she had entirely forgot her appointment with Dr. Harrison. When she was informed at her return home, that the doctor had been to wait upon her, and had expressed some anger at her being gone out, she became greatly uneasy, and begged of her husband to go to the doctor's lodgings, and make her apology.

But lest the reader should be as angry with the doctor, as he had declared himself with Amelia, we think proper to explain the matter. Nothing then was farther from the doctor's mind than the conception of any anger towards Amelia. On the contrary, when the girl answered him, that her mistress was not at home, the doctor said with great good humour, 'How! not at home! then tell your mistress she is a giddy vagabond, and I will come to see her no more till she sends for me.'—This the poor girl, from misunderstanding one word, and half forgetting the rest, had construed into great passion and several very bad words, and a declaration that he would never see Amelia any more.

C H A P. VIII.

In which two strangers make their appearance.

BOOOTH went to the doctor's lodgings, and found him engaged with his country friend and his son, a young gentleman who was lately in orders; both whom the doctor had left, to keep his appointment with Amelia.

After what we mentioned at the end of the last chapter,

chapter, we need take little notice of the apology made by Booth, or the doctor's reception of it, which was in his peculiar manner. 'Your wife,' said he, 'is a vain hussy to think herself worth my anger; but tell her, I have the vanity myself to think I cannot be angry without a better cause. And yet tell her, I intend to punish her for her levity: for if you go abroad, I have determined to take her down with me into the country, and make her do penance there till your return.'

'Dear sir,' said Booth, 'I know not how to thank you, if you are in earnest.'

'I assure you then I am in earnest,' cries the doctor; 'but you need not thank me, however, since you know not how.——'

'But would not that, sir,' said Booth, 'be shewing a slight to the colonel's invitation? and you know I have so many obligations to him.'

'Don't tell me of the colonel,' cries the doctor; 'the church is to be first served. Besides, sir, I have priority of right, even to you yourself. You stole my little lamb from me: for I was her first love.'

'Well, sir,' cries Booth, 'if I should be so unhappy to leave her to any one, she must herself determine; and, I believe, it will not be difficult to guess where her choice will fall: for of all men, next to her husband, I believe, none can contend with Dr. Harrison in her favour.'

'Since you say so,' cries the doctor,—'fetch her hither to dine with us: for I am at least so good a christian to love those that love me—I will shew you my daughter, my old friend; for I am really proud of her—and you may bring my grand-children with you, if you please.'

Booth made some compliments, and then went on his errand. As soon as he was gone, the old gentleman said to the doctor, 'Pray, my good friend, what daughter is this of yours? I never so much as heard that you was married.'

'And what then,' cries the doctor, 'did you ever hear that a pope was married; and yet some of them have had sons and daughters, I believe; but, however,

‘ever, this young gentleman will absolve me without obliging me to penance.’

‘I have not yet that power,’ answered the young clergyman: ‘For I am only in deacon’s orders.’

‘Are you not?’ cries the doctor; ‘why then, I will absolve myself. You are to know then, my good friend, that this young lady was the daughter of a neighbour of mine, who is since dead, and whose sins I hope are forgiven: for she had too much to answer for on her child’s account. Her father was my intimate acquaintance and friend; a worthier man, indeed, I believe, never lived. He died suddenly when his children were infants; and, perhaps, to the suddenness of his death it was owing, that he did not recommend any care of them to me. However, I, in some measure, took that charge upon me; and particularly of her whom I call my daughter. Indeed, as she grew up, she discovered so many good qualities, that she wanted not the remembrance of her father’s merit to recommend her. I do her no more than justice, when I say, she is one of the best creatures I ever knew. She hath a sweetness of temper, a generosity of spirit, an openness of heart — in a word, she hath a true christian disposition. I may call her an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.’

‘I wish you joy of your daughter,’ cries the old gentleman: ‘For to a man of your disposition, to find out an adequate object of your benevolence, is, I acknowledge, to find a treasure.’

‘It is, indeed, a happiness,’ cries the doctor.

‘The greatest difficulty,’ added the gentleman, ‘which persons of your turn of mind meet with, is in finding proper objects of their goodness: for nothing sure can be more irksome to a generous mind, than to discover, that it hath thrown away all its good offices on a soil that bears no other fruit than ingratitude.’

‘I remember,’ cries the doctor, ‘Phocylides faith,

Μὴ κακὸν εὖ ἔρξῃς· σπείρειν ἴσον ἐς' ἐνὶ σόῳ ἔστι.*

‘ But he speaks more like a philosopher than a christian. I am more pleased with a French writer, one of the best, indeed, that I ever read; who blames men for lamenting the ill return which is so often made to the best offices†. A true christian can never be disappointed, if he doth not receive his reward in this world: the labourer might as well complain, that he is not paid his hire in the middle of the day.’

‘ I own, indeed,’ said the gentleman, ‘ if we see it in that light——’

‘ And in what light should we see it?’ answered the doctor. ‘ Are we like Agrippa, only almost christians? or, is christianity a matter of bare theory, and not a rule for our practice?’

‘ Practical undoubtedly, undoubtedly practical,’ cries the gentleman. ‘ Your example might indeed have convinced me long ago, that we ought to do good to every one.’

‘ Pardon me, father,’ cries the young divine, ‘ that is rather a heathenish than a christian doctrine. Homer, I remember, introduces in his Iliad one Axy-lus, of whom he says,

‡ Φίλον δ' ἦν ἀνθρώποισι
Πάντας γὰρ φιλοῖσκεν.

‘ But Plato, who of all the heathens came nearest to the christian philosophy, condemned this as impious doctrine; so Eustathius tells us, folio 474.

‘ I know he doth,’ cries the doctor, ‘ and so Barnes tells us, in his note upon the place; but if you remember the rest of the quotation, as well as you do that from Eustathius, you might have added the observation which Mr. Dryden makes in favour of this

* To do a kindness to a bad man, is like sowing your seed in the sea.

† D'Esprit.

‡ He was a friend to mankind, for he loved them all.

‘ passage,

‘passage, that he found not in all the Latin authors
 ‘so admirable an instance of extensive humanity. You
 ‘might have likewise remembered the noble senti-
 ‘ment, with which Mr. Barnes ends his note, the
 ‘sense of which is taken from the fifth chapter of
 ‘Matthew,

—ὅς κ' ῥά τ' ἡλίσι

Μίγδ' ἀγαθοῖσι κακοῖσι τ' ἐπ' ἀνδράσιν ἐξαγατέλλει.

‘It seems, therefore, as if this character rather be-
 ‘came a christian than a heathen : for Homer could
 ‘not have transcribed it from any of his deities.
 ‘Whom is it, therefore, we imitate by such extensive
 ‘benevolence?’

‘What a prodigious memory you have!’ cries the
 old gentleman : ‘Indeed, son, you must not contend
 ‘with the doctor in these matters.’

‘I shall not give my opinion hastily,’ cries the
 son. ‘I know again what Mr. Poole, in his Anno-
 ‘tations, says on that verse of St. Matthew—That it
 ‘is only to *heap up coals of fire upon their heads*—How
 ‘are we to understand, pray, the text immediately
 ‘preceding? *Love your enemies, bless them that curse*
 ‘*you, do good to them that hate you.*’

‘You know, I suppose, young gentleman,’ said the
 doctor, ‘how these words are generally understood—
 ‘The commentator you mention, I think, tells us,
 ‘that love is not here to be taken in the strict sense, so
 ‘as to signify the complacency of the heart; you may
 ‘hate your enemies as God’s enemies, and seek due
 ‘revenge of them for his honour; and for your own
 ‘sakes too you may seek moderate satisfaction of
 ‘them; but then, you are to love them with a love
 ‘consistent with these things—that is to say, in plainer
 ‘words, you are to love them and hate them, and
 ‘bless and curse, and do them good and mischief.’

‘Excellent! admirable!’ said the old gentleman.
 ‘You have a most inimitable turn to ridicule.’

‘I do not approve ridicule,’ said the son, ‘on such
 ‘subjects.’

‘Nor

‘Nor I neither,’ cries the doctor, ‘I will give you my opinion, therefore, very seriously. The two verses taken together contain a very positive precept, delivered in the plainest words, and yet illustrated by the clearest instance, in the conduct of the Supreme Being; and lastly, the practice of this precept is most nobly enforced by the reward annexed—*that ye may be the children*, and so forth. No man, who understands what it is to love, and to bless, and to do good, can mistake the meaning. But if they required any comment, the scripture itself affords enough. *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing*—They do not, indeed, want the comments of men, who, when they cannot bend their minds to the obedience of scripture, are desirous to wrest scripture to a compliance with their own inclinations.’

‘Most nobly and justly observed,’ cries the old gentleman. ‘Indeed, my good friend, you have explained the text with the utmost perspicuity.’

‘But if this be the meaning,’ cries the son, ‘there must be an end of all law and justice——for I do not see how any man can prosecute his enemy in a court of justice.’

‘Pardon me sir,’ cries the doctor. ‘Indeed, as an enemy merely, and from a spirit of revenge, he cannot, and he ought not to prosecute him; but as an offender against the laws of his country, he may, and it is his duty so to do: is there any spirit of revenge in the magistrates or officers of justice, when they punish criminals? Why do such, ordinarily I mean, concern themselves in inflicting punishments, but because it is their duty? and why may not a private man deliver an offender into the hands of justice, from the same laudable motive? Revenge, indeed, of all kinds is strictly prohibited; wherefore, as we are not to execute with our own hands, so neither are we to make use of the law as the instrument of private malice, and to worry each other with inveteracy and rancour. And where is the great difficulty in obeying this wise, this gene-
rous,

‘ rous, this noble precept? If revenge be, as a certain divine, not greatly to his honour, calls it, the most luscious morsel the devil ever dropt into the mouth of a sinner, it must be allowed at least to cost us often extremely dear. It is a dainty, if indeed it be one, which we come at with great inquietude, with great difficulty, and with great danger. However pleasant it may be to the palate, while we are feeding on it, it is sure to leave a bitter relish behind it; and so far, indeed, it may be called a luscious morsel, that the most greedy appetites are soon glutted, and the most eager longing for it is soon turned into loathing and repentance. I allow there is something tempting in its outward appearance; but it is like the beautiful colour of some poisons, from which, however they may attract our eyes, a regard to our own welfare commands us to abstain. And this is an abstinence to which wisdom alone, without any divine command, hath been often found adequate; with instances of which, the Greek and Latin authors every where abound. May not a christian, therefore, be well ashamed of making a stumbling-block of a precept, which is not only consistent with his worldly interest, but to which so noble an incentive is proposed?’

The old gentleman fell into raptures at this speech, and after making many compliments to the doctor upon it, he turned to his son, and told him, he had an opportunity now of learning more in one day, than he had learnt at the university in a twelve-month.

The son replied, that he allowed the doctrine to be extremely good in general, and that he agreed with the greater part; ‘but I must make a distinction,’ said he. However, he was interrupted from his distinction at present; for now Booth returned with Amelia and the children.

C H A P. IX.

A scene of modern wit and humour.

IN the afternoon, the old gentleman proposed a walk to Vauxhall; a place of which, he said, he had heard much, but had never seen it.

The doctor readily agreed to his friend's proposal, and soon after ordered two coaches to be sent for to carry the whole company. But when the servant was gone for them, Booth acquainted the doctor that it was yet too early. 'Is it so?' said the doctor; 'why then, I will carry you first to one of the greatest and highest entertainments in the world.'

The children pricked up their ears at this; nor did any of the company guess what he meant; and Amelia asked what entertainment he could carry them to at that time of the day.

'Suppose,' says the doctor, 'I should carry you to court?'

'At five o'clock in the afternoon!' cries Booth.

'Ay, suppose I should have interest enough to introduce you into the presence?'

'You are jesting, dear sir,' cries Amelia.

'Indeed, I am serious,' answered the doctor. 'I will introduce you into that presence, compared to whom the greatest emperor on the earth is many millions of degrees meaner than the most contemptible reptile is to him. What entertainment can there be to a rational being equal to this? was not the taste of mankind most wretchedly depraved, where would the vain man find an honour, or where would the love of pleasure propose so adequate an object as divine worship? with what ecstasy must the contemplation of being admitted to such a presence fill the mind! The pitiful courts of princes are open to few, and to those only at particular seasons; but from this glorious and gracious presence, we are none of us, and at no time, excluded.'

The doctor was proceeding thus, when the servant returned, saying, the coaches were ready; and the

whole company with the greatest alacrity attended the doctor to St. James's church.

When the service was ended, and they were again got into their coaches, Amelia returned the doctor many thanks for the light in which he had placed divine worship; assuring him, that she had never before had so much transport in her devotion as at this time, and saying, she believed she should be the better for this notion he had given her, as long as she lived.

The coaches being come to the water side, they all alighted, and getting into one boat proceeded to Vauxhall.

The extreme beauty and elegance of this place is well known to almost every one of my readers: and happy is it for me that it is so; since, to give an adequate idea of it, would exceed my power of description. To delineate the particular beauties of these gardens, would, indeed, require as much pains, and as much paper too, as to rehearse all the good actions of their master; whose life proves the truth of an observation, which I have read in some ethic writer, that a truly elegant taste is generally accompanied with an excellency of heart; or, in other words, that true virtue is, indeed, nothing else but true taste.

Here our company diverted themselves with walking an hour or two before the music began. Of all the seven, Booth alone had ever been here before; so that, to all the rest, the place, with its other charms, had that of novelty. When the music played, Amelia, who stood next to the doctor, said to him in a whisper, 'I hope I am not guilty of profaneness; but, in pursuance of that cheerful chain of thoughts with which you have inspired me this afternoon, I was just now lost in a reverie, and fancied myself in those blissful mansions which we hope to enjoy hereafter. The delicious sweetness of the place, the enchanting charms of the music, and the satisfaction which appears in every one's countenance, carried my soul almost to heaven in its ideas. I could not have, indeed, imagined there had been any thing like this in this world.'

The

The doctor smiled, and said, ' You see, dear madam, there may be pleasures, of which you could conceive no idea, till you actually enjoyed them.'

And now the little boy, who had long withstood the attractions of several cheese-cakes that passed to and fro, could contain no longer; but asked his mother to give him one, saying, ' I am sure, my sister would be glad of another, though she is ashamed to ask.' The doctor, overhearing the child, proposed that they should all retire to some place where they might sit down and refresh themselves, which they accordingly did. Amelia now missed her husband; but, as she had three men in her company, and one of them was the doctor, she concluded herself and her children to be safe, and doubted not but that Booth would soon find her out.

They now sat down, and the doctor very gallantly desired Amelia to call for what she liked. Upon which the children were supplied with cakes; and some ham and chicken were provided for the rest of the company. With which, while they were regaling themselves with the highest satisfaction, two young fellows walking arm in arm came up, and when they came opposite to Amelia, stood still, staring Amelia full in the face, and one of them cried aloud to the other, ' D——n me, my Lord, if she is not an angel!'—My Lord stood still, staring likewise at her, without speaking a word—when two others of the same gang came up—and one of them cried—' Come along, Jack, I have seen her before; but she is too well manned already. Three —— are enough for one woman, or the devil is in it.'

' D——n me,' says he that spoke first, and whom they called Jack, ' I will have a brush at her, if she belonged to the whole convocation.' And so saying, he went up to the young clergyman, and cried——' Doctor, sit up a little, if you please, and don't take up more room in a bed than belongs to you.' At which words, he gave the young man a push, and seated himself down directly over against Amelia; and leaning both his elbows on the table, he fixed his eyes on her in a manner with which modesty can neither look, nor bear to be looked at.

Amelia seemed greatly shocked at this treatment; upon which the doctor removed her within him, and then facing the gentleman, asked him what he meant by this rude behaviour——Upon which my lord stepped up, and said, ‘Don’t be impertinent, old gentleman. Do you think such fellows as you, are to keep, d—n me, such fine wenches, d—n me, to yourselves, d—n me?’

‘No, no,’ cries Jack, ‘the old gentleman is more reasonable. Here’s the fellow that eats up the tythe pig. Don’t you see how his mouth waters at her?’ —— ‘Where’s your slabbering bib?’ For, though the gentleman had rightly guessed he was a clergyman; yet, he had not any of those insignia on, with which it would have been improper to have appeared there.

‘Such boys as you,’ cries the young clergyman, ‘ought to be well whipped at school, instead of being suffered to become nuisances in the society.’

‘Boys, sir!’ says Jack, ‘I believe I am as good a man as yourself, Mr. ——, and as good a scholar too. *Bos fur sus quotque sacerdos.*———Tell me what’s next. D—n me, I’ll hold you fifty pounds ——you don’t tell me what’s next.’

‘You have him, Jack,’ cries my Lord. ‘It is over with him, d—n me. He can’t strike another blow.’

‘If I had you in a proper place,’ cries the clergyman, ‘you should find I would strike a blow, and a pretty hard one too.’

‘There,’ cries my Lord, ‘there is the meekness of the clergyman——There spoke the wolf in sheep’s cloathing. D—n me, how big he looks——You must be civil to him, faith! or else he will burst with pride.’

‘Ay, ay,’ cries Jack, ‘let the clergy alone for pride; there’s not a Lord in the kingdom now hath half the pride of that fellow.’

‘Pray, sir,’ cries the doctor, turning to the other, ‘are you a Lord?’

‘Yes, Mr. ——,’ cries he, ‘I have that honour, indeed.’

‘And I suppose you have pride too,’ said the doctor. ‘I hope

'I hope I have, sir,' answered he, 'at your service.'

'If such a one as you, sir,' cries the doctor, 'who are not only a scandal to the title you bear as a Lord, but even as a man, can pretend to pride, why will you not allow it to a clergyman? I suppose, sir, by your dress, you are in the army; and, by the ribbon in your hat, you seem to be proud of that too. How much greater and more honourable is the service in which that gentleman is enlisted than your's! Why, then, should you object to the pride of the clergy, since the lowest of the function is in reality every way so much your superior?'

'Tida Tidu Tidum,'—cries my Lord.

'However, gentlemen,' cries the doctor, 'if you have the least pretension to that name, I beg you will put an end to your frolic; since you see it gives so much uneasiness to the lady. Nay, I entreat you, for your own sakes; for here is one coming, who will talk to you in a very different style from ours.'

'One coming!' cries my Lord—'what care I who is coming?'

'I suppose it is the devil,' cries Jack; 'for here are two of his livery servants already.'

'Let the devil come as soon as he will,' cries my Lord, 'D—n me if I have not a kiss.'

Amelia now fell a trembling; and her children, perceiving her fright, both hung on her, and began to cry—when Booth and Captain Trent both came up.

Booth, seeing his wife disordered, asked eagerly what was the matter. At the same time, the Lord and his companion seeing Captain Trent, whom they well knew—said both together,—'What! doth this company belong to you?' When the doctor, with great presence of mind, as he was apprehensive of some fatal consequence if Booth should know what had passed, said, 'So, Mr. Booth, I am glad you are returned; your poor lady here began to be frightened out of her wits.' 'But now you have him again,' said he to Amelia, 'I hope you will be easy.'

Amelia, frightened as she was, presently took the hint, and greatly chid her husband for leaving her. But the little boy was not so quick-sighted, and cried — ‘ Indeed, papa, those naughty men there have frightened my mamma out of her wits.’

‘ How !’ cries Booth, a little moved, ‘ Frightened ! Hath any one frighten’d you, my dear ?’

‘ No, my love,’ answered she, ‘ nothing. I know not what the child means. Every thing is well, now I see you safe.’

Trent had been all the while talking aside with the young sparks ; and now addressing himself to Booth, said, ‘ Here hath been some little mistake ; I believe my Lord mistook Mrs. Booth for some other lady.’

‘ It is impossible,’ cries my Lord, ‘ to know every one.—I am sure, if I had known the lady to be a woman of fashion, and an acquaintance of Captain Trent, I should have said nothing disagreeable to her ; but, if I have, I ask her pardon, and the company’s.’

‘ I am in the dark,’ cries Booth. ‘ Pray, what is all this matter ?’

‘ Nothing of any consequence,’ cries the doctor, ‘ nor worth your enquiring into———You hear it was a mistake of the person ; and I really believe his Lordship, that all proceeded from his not knowing to whom the lady belonged.’

‘ Come, come,’ says Trent, ‘ there is nothing in the matter, I assure you. I will tell you the whole another time.’

‘ Very well, since you say so,’ cries Booth, ‘ I am contented.’ So ended the affair, and the two sparks made their congee and sneaked off.

‘ Now they are gone,’ said the young gentleman, ‘ I must say, I never saw two worse bred jackanapes, nor fellows that deserved to be kick’d more. If I had had them in another place, I would have taught them a little more respect to the church.’

‘ You took rather a better way,’ answered the doctor, ‘ to teach them that respect.’

Booth now desired his friend Trent to sit down with them, and proposed to call for a fresh bottle of wine ; but

but Amelia's spirits were too much disconcerted to give her any prospect of pleasure that evening. She therefore laid hold of the pretence of her children, for whom she said the hour was already too late; with which the doctor agreed. So they paid their reckoning, and departed; leaving to the two rakes the triumph of having totally dissipated the mirth of this little innocent company, who were before enjoying complete satisfaction.

C H A P. X.

A curious conversation between the doctor, the young clergyman, and the young clergyman's father.

THE next morning, when the doctor and his two friends were at breakfast, the young clergyman, in whose mind the injurious treatment he had received the evening before was very deeply impressed, renewed the conversation on that subject. 'It is a scandal,' said he, 'to the government, that they do not preserve more respect to the clergy, by punishing all rudeness to them with the utmost severity. It was very justly observed of you, sir,' says he to the doctor, 'that the lowest clergyman in England is in real dignity superior to the highest nobleman. What then can be so shocking, as to see that gown, which ought to entitle us to the veneration of all we meet, treated with contempt and ridicule? Are we not, in fact, ambassadors from heaven, to the world; and do they not, therefore, in denying us our due respect, deny it in reality to him that sent us?'

'If that be the case,' says the doctor, 'it behoves them to look to themselves; for he who sent us, is able to exact most severe vengeance for the ill treatment of his ministers.'

'Very true, sir,' cries the young one; 'and I heartily hope he will: but those punishments are at too great a distance to infuse terror into wicked minds. The government ought to interfere with its immediate censures. Fines and imprisonments

‘ and corporal punishments operate more forcibly on the human mind, than all the fears of damnation.’

‘ Do you think so?’ cries the doctor; ‘ then I am afraid men are very little in earnest in those fears.’

‘ Most justly observed,’ says the old gentleman. ‘ Indeed, I am afraid that is too much the case.’

‘ In that,’ said the son, ‘ the government is to blame. Are not books of infidelity, treating our holy religion as a mere imposture; nay, sometimes, as a mere jest, published daily, and spread abroad amongst the people with perfect impunity?’

‘ You are certainly in the right,’ says the doctor, ‘ there is a most blameable remissness with regard to these matters; but the whole blame doth not lie there; some little share of the fault is, I am afraid, to be imputed to the clergy themselves.’

‘ Indeed, sir,’ cries the young one, ‘ I did not expect that charge from a gentleman of your cloth. Do the clergy give any encouragement to such books? Do they not, on the contrary, cry loudly out against the suffering them? This is the invidious aspersions of the laity; and I did not expect to hear it confirmed by one of our own cloth.’

‘ Be not too impatient, young gentleman,’ said the doctor, ‘ I do not absolutely confirm the charge of the laity: it is much too general, and too severe; but even the laity themselves do not attack them in that part to which you have applied your defence. They are not supposed such fools as to attack that religion to which they owe their temporal welfare. They are not taxed with giving any other support to infidelity, than what it draws from the ill examples of their lives; I mean of the lives of some of them. Here too the laity carry their censures too far: for there are very few or none of the clergy, whose lives, if compared with those of the laity, can be called profligate: but such, indeed, is the perfect purity of our religion; such is the innocence and virtue, which it exacts to entitle us to its glorious rewards, and to screen us from its dreadful punishments, that he must be a very good man indeed who lives up to it. Thus then these persons argue. This man is
‘ educated

‘ educated in a perfect knowledge of religion, is
‘ learned in its laws, and is by his profession obliged
‘ in a manner to have them always before his eyes.’
‘ The rewards which it promises to the obedience of
‘ these laws are, so great, and the punishments threat-
‘ ened on disobedience so dreadful, that it is impossi-
‘ ble but all men must fearfully fly from the one, and
‘ as eagerly pursue the other. If therefore such a per-
‘ son lives in direct opposition to, and in a constant
‘ breach of these laws, the inference is obvious.
‘ There is a pleasant story in Matthew Paris, which I
‘ will tell you as well as I can remember it. Two
‘ young gentlemen, I think they were priests, agreed
‘ together, that, whosoever died first, should return
‘ and acquaint his friend with the secrets of the other
‘ world. One of them died soon after, and fulfilled
‘ his promise. The whole relation he gave is not very
‘ material; but, among other things, he produced
‘ one of his hands, which Satan had made use of, to
‘ write upon, as the moderns do on a card, and had
‘ sent his compliments to the priests, for the number
‘ of souls, which the wicked examples of their lives
‘ daily sent to hell. This story is the more remark-
‘ able, as it was written by a priest, and a great fa-
‘ vourer of his order.’

‘ Excellent,’ cried the old gentleman, ‘ what a me-
‘ mory you have!’

‘ But, sir,’ cries the young one, ‘ a clergyman is a
‘ man as well as another; and, if such perfect purity
‘ be expected,’—

‘ I do not expect it,’ cries the doctor; ‘ and I hope
‘ it will not be expected of us. The scripture itself
‘ gives us this hope, where the best of us are said to
‘ fall twenty times a day. But sure we may not al-
‘ low the practice of any of those grosser crimes which
‘ contaminate the whole mind. We may expect an
‘ obedience to the ten commandments, and an absti-
‘ nence from such notorious vices; as, in the first
‘ place, Avarice, which indeed can hardly subsist
‘ without the breach of more commandments than one:
‘ Indeed, it would be excessive candour to imagine,
‘ that a man, who so visibly sets his whole heart not

only on this world, but on one of the most worthless things in it (for so is money, without regard to its uses), should be at the same time laying up his treasure in heaven. Ambition is a second vice of this sort: We are told we cannot serve God and Mammon. I might have applied this to Avarice; but I chose rather to mention it here. When we see a man sneaking about in courts and levees, and doing the dirty work of great men, from the hopes of preferment; can we believe, that a fellow, whom we see to have so many hard task-masters upon earth, ever thinks of his master which is in heaven? Must he not think himself, if he ever reflects at all, that so glorious a master will disdain and disown a servant, who is the dutiful tool of a court-favourite; and employed either as the pimp of his pleasure, or sometimes perhaps made a dirty channel, to assist in the conveyance of that corruption, which is clogging up and destroying the very vitals of his country?

The last vice which I shall mention, is Pride. There is not in the universe a more ridiculous, nor a more contemptible animal, than a proud clergyman; a turkey-cock, or a jackdaw, are objects of veneration, when compared with him. I don't mean, by Pride, that noble dignity of mind to which goodness can only administer an adequate object, which delights in the testimony of its own conscience, and could not, without the highest agonies, bear its condemnation. By Pride, I mean, that saucy passion, which exults in every little eventual pre-eminence over other men; such are the ordinary gifts of nature, and the paultry presents of fortune, wit, knowledge, birth, strength, beauty, riches, titles, and rank. That passion which is ever aspiring, like a silly child, to look over the heads of all about them; which, while it servilely adheres to the great, flies from the poor, as if afraid of contamination; devouring greedily every murmur of applause, and every look of admiration; pleased and elated with all kind of respect; and hurt and enflamed with the contempt of the lowest and most despicable of fools even with such as treated you last night disrespectful-
fully

'fully at Vauxhall. Can such a mind as this be fixed on things above? Can such a man reflect that he hath the ineffable honour to be employed in the immediate service of his great Creator? or, can he please himself with the heart-warming hope, that his ways are acceptable in the sight of that glorious, that incomprehensible Being?'

'Hear, child, hear,' cries the old gentleman, 'hear and improve your understanding. Indeed, my good friend, no one retires from you without carrying away some good instructions with him. Learn of the doctor, Tom, and you will be the better man as long as you live.'

'Undoubtedly, sir,' answered Tom, 'the doctor hath spoken a great deal of excellent truth; and, without a compliment to him, I was always a great admirer of his sermons, particularly of their oratory. But,

Nec tamen hoc tribuens dederim quoque cætera:

'I cannot agree that a clergyman is obliged to put up with an affront any more than another man, and more especially when it is paid to the order.'

'I am very sorry, young gentleman,' cries the doctor, 'that you should be ever liable to be affronted as a clergyman; and, I do assure you, if I had known your disposition formerly, the order should never have been affronted through you.'

The old gentleman now began to check his son, for his opposition to the doctor; when a servant delivered the latter a note from Amelia, which he read immediately to himself, and it contained the following words:

‘ My dear fir,

‘ **S**omething hath happened since I saw you, which gives me great uneasiness, and I beg the favour of seeing you as soon as possible, to advise with you upon it.

‘ I am,

‘ Your most obliged

‘ and dutiful daughter,

‘ Amelia Booth.’

The doctor’s answer was, that he would wait on the lady directly ; and then turning to his friend, he asked him if he would not take a walk in the Park before dinner. ‘ I must go,’ says he, ‘ to the lady who was with us last night ; for I am afraid, by her letter, some bad accident hath happened to her. Come, young gentleman, I spoke a little too hastily to you just now ; but I ask your pardon. Some allowance must be made to the warmth of your blood. I hope, we shall in time both think alike.’

The old gentleman made his friend another compliment ; and the young one declared, he hoped he should always think, and act too, with the dignity becoming his cloth. After which, the doctor took his leave for a while, and went to Amelia’s lodgings.

As soon as he was gone, the old gentleman fell very severely on his son. ‘ Tom,’ says he, ‘ how can you be such a fool, to undo by your perverseness all that I have been doing ? Why will you not learn to study mankind with the attention which I have employed to that purpose ? Do you think, if I had affronted this obstinate old fellow as you do, I should ever have engaged his friendship ?’

‘ I cannot help it, sir,’ said Tom ; ‘ I have not studied six years at the university, to give up my sentiments to every one. It is true, indeed, he put together a sett of sounding words ; but, in the main, I never heard any one talk more foolishly.’

‘ What of that,’ cries the father ; ‘ I never told you he was a wise man, nor did I ever think him so. If he had any understanding, he would have been a
‘ bishop

‘ bishop long ago, to my certain knowledge. But, indeed, he hath been always a fool in private life; for I question whether he is worth 100*l.* in the world, more than his annual income. He hath given away above half his fortune to the Lord knows who. I believe I have had above 200*l.* of him, first and last; and, would you lose such a milch-cow as this for want of a few compliments? Indeed, Tom, thou art as great a simpleton as himself. How do you expect to rise in the church, if you cannot temporise, and give into the opinion of your superiors?’

‘ I don’t know, sir,’ cries Tom, ‘ what you mean by my superiors. In one sense, I own, a doctor of divinity is superior to a batchelor of arts, and so far I am ready to allow his superiority; but I understand Greek and Hebrew as well as he, and will maintain my opinion against him, or any other in the schools.’

‘ Tom,’ cries the old gentleman, ‘ till thou gettest the better of thy conceit, I shall never have any hopes of thee. If thou art wise, thou wilt think every man thy superior, of whom thou canst get any thing; at least, thou wilt persuade him that thou thinkest so, and that is sufficient. Tom, Tom, thou hast no policy in thee.’

‘ What have I been learning these seven years,’ answered he, ‘ in the university? However, father, I can account for your opinion. It is the common failing of old men to attribute all wisdom to themselves. Nestor did it long ago; but, if you will enquire my character at college, I fancy you will not think I want to go to school again.’

The father and son then went to take their walk, during which the former repeated many good lessons of policy to his son, not greatly perhaps to his edification. In truth, if the old gentleman’s fondness had not in a great measure blinded him to the imperfections of his son, he would have soon perceived that he was sowing all his instructions in a soil so choaked with self-conceit, that it was utterly impossible they should ever bear any fruit.

AMELIA.

BOOK X.

CHAP. I.

To which we will prefix no preface.

THE doctor found Amélia alone, for Booth was gone to walk with his new-revived acquaintance, Captain Trent, who seemed so pleased with the renewal of his intercourse with his old brother officer, that he had been almost continually with him from the time of their meeting at the drum.

Amelia acquainted the doctor with the purport of her message, as follows: ‘I ask your pardon, my dear sir, for troubling you so often with my affairs; but I know your extreme readiness, as well as ability, to assist any one with your advice. The fact is, that my husband hath been presented by Colonel James with two tickets for a masquerade, which is to be in a day or two; and he insists so strongly on my going with him, that I really do not know how to refuse, without giving some reason; and I am not able to invent any other than the true one, which you would not, I am sure, advise me to communicate to him. Indeed, I had a most narrow escape the other day; for I was almost drawn in inadvertently, by a very strange accident, to acquaint him with the whole matter.’ She then related the serjeant’s dream, with all the consequences that attended it.

The doctor considered a little with himself, and then said, ‘I am really, child, puzzled as well as
‘ you

‘ you about this matter. I would by no means have
‘ you go to the masquerade; I do not indeed like
‘ the diversion itself, as I have heard it described to
‘ me: Not that I am such a prude to suspect every
‘ woman who goes there of any evil intentions; but
‘ it is a pleasure of too loose and disorderly a kind
‘ for the recreation of a sober mind. Indeed, you
‘ have a still stronger and more particular objection.
‘ I will try myself to reason him out of it.’

‘ Indeed, it is impossible,’ answered she; ‘ and
‘ therefore I would not set you about it. I never saw
‘ him more set on any thing. There is a party, as
‘ they call it, made on the occasion; and he tells me
‘ my refusal will disappoint all.’

‘ I really do not know what to advise you,’ cries
the doctor: ‘ I have told you I do not approve these
‘ diversions; but yet, as your husband is so very de-
‘ sirous, I cannot think there will be any harm in
‘ going with him. However, I will consider of it, and
‘ do all in my power for you.’

Here Mrs. Atkinson came in, and the discourse on
this subject ceased; but soon after Amelia renewed it,
saying, there was no occasion to keep any thing a
secret from her friend. They then fell to debating on
the subject; but could not come to any resolution.
But Mrs. Atkinson, who was in an unusual flow of
spirits, cried out, ‘ Fear nothing, my dear Amelia,
‘ two women surely will be too hard for one man. I
‘ think, doctor, it exceeds Virgil:

Una dolo divum si fœmina victor duorum est:

‘ Very well repeated indeed,’ cries the doctor.
‘ Do you understand all Virgil as well as you seem to
‘ do that line?’

‘ I hope I do, sir,’ said she; ‘ and Horace too;
‘ or else my father threw away his time to very little
‘ purpose in teaching me.’

‘ I ask your pardon, madam,’ cries the doctor. ‘ I
‘ own, it was an impertinent question.’

‘ Not at all, sir,’ says she; ‘ and, if you are one
‘ of those who imagine women incapable of learning,
‘ I shall

‘ I shall not be offended at it. I know the common opinion; but

Interdum vulgus rectum videt, est ubi peccat.

‘ If I was to profess such an opinion, madam,’ said the doctor, ‘ madam Dacier and yourself would bear testimony against me. The utmost indeed that I should venture, would be to question the utility of learning in a young lady’s education.’

‘ I own,’ said Mrs. Atkinson, ‘ as the world is constituted, it cannot be as serviceable to her fortune, as it will be to that of a man; but you will allow, doctor, that learning may afford a woman at least a reasonable and an innocent entertainment.’

‘ But I will suppose,’ cried the doctor, ‘ it may have its inconveniences. As for instance, if a learned lady should meet with an unlearned husband, might she not be apt to despise him?’

‘ I think not,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson——‘ and if I may be allowed the instance—I think I have shewn myself, that women who have learning themselves, can be contented without that qualification in a man.’

‘ To be sure,’ cries the doctor, ‘ there may be other qualifications, which may have their weight in the balance. But let us take the other side of the question, and suppose the learned of both sexes to meet in the matrimonial union, may it not afford one excellent subject of disputation, which is the most learned?’

‘ Not at all,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson; ‘ for, if they had both learning and good sense, they would soon see on which side the superiority lay.’

‘ But if the learned man,’ said the doctor, ‘ should be a little unreasonable in his opinion, are you sure that the learned woman would preserve her duty to her husband, and submit?’

‘ But why,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson, ‘ must we necessarily suppose that a learned man would be unreasonable?’

‘ Nay,

‘Nay, madam,’ said the doctor, ‘I am not your husband; and you shall not hinder me from supposing what I please. Surely it is not such a paradox, to conceive that a man of learning would be unreasonable. Are there no unreasonable opinions in very learned authors, even among the critics themselves? For instance, what can be a more strange, and indeed unreasonable opinion, than to prefer the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid to the *Æneid* of Virgil?’

‘It would be indeed so strange,’ cries the lady, ‘that you shall not persuade me it was ever the opinion of any man.’

‘Perhaps not,’ cries the doctor; ‘and I believe you and I should not differ in our judgments of any person who maintained such an opinion—What a taste must he have.’

‘A most contemptible one indeed,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson.

‘I am satisfied,’ cries the doctor. ‘And in the words of your own Horace, *Verbum non amplius addam.*’

‘But how provoking is this!’ cries Mrs. Atkinson, ‘to draw one in in such a manner. I protest, I was so warm in the defence of my favourite Virgil, that I was not aware of your design; but all your triumph depends on a supposition that one should be so unfortunate as to meet with the silliest fellow in the world.’

‘Not in the least,’ cries the doctor. ‘Doctor Bentley was not such a person; and yet he would have quarrelled, I am convinced, with any wise in the world, in behalf of one of his corrections. I don’t suppose he would have given up his *Ingentia Fata* to an angel.’

‘But do you think,’ said she, ‘if I had loved him, I would have contended with him?’

‘Perhaps you might sometimes,’ said the doctor, ‘be of these sentiments; but you remember your own Virgil—*Varium et mutabile semper Fœmina.*’

‘Nay, Amelia,’ said Mrs. Atkinson, ‘you are now concerned as well as I am; for he hath now
‘abused

‘abused the whole sex, and quoted the severest thing that ever was said against us, though I allow it is one of the finest.’

‘With all my heart, my dear,’ cries Amelia. ‘I have the advantage of you however, for I don’t understand him.’

‘Nor doth she understand much better than yourself,’ cries the doctor, ‘or she would not admire nonsense even though in Virgil.’

‘Pardon me, sir,’ said she.

‘And pardon me, madam,’ cries the doctor with a feigned seriousness, ‘I say a boy in the fourth form at Eton would be whipt, or would deserve to be whipt at least, who made the Neuter Gender agree with the Feminine. You have heard, however, that Virgil left his *Æneid* incorrect; and, perhaps, had he lived to correct it, we should not have seen the faults we now see in it.’

‘Why, it is very true as you say, doctor,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson—‘There seems to be a false concord. I protest, I never thought of it before.’

‘And yet this is the Virgil,’ answered the doctor, ‘that you are so fond of, who hath made you all of the Neuter Gender; or, as we say in English, he hath made mere animals of you: for, if we translate it thus,

‘Woman is a various and changeable animal,’

‘there will be no fault, I believe, unless in point of civility to the ladies.’

Mrs. Atkinson had just time to tell the doctor he was a provoking creature, before the arrival of Booth and his friend put an end to that learned discourse, in which neither of the parties had greatly recommended themselves to each other, the doctor’s opinion of the lady being not at all heightened by her progress in the classics; and she, on the other hand, having conceived a great dislike in her heart towards the doctor, which would have raged, perhaps, with no less fury from the consideration that he had been her husband.

C H A P. II.

What happened at the masquerade.

FROM this time to the day of the masquerade, nothing happened of consequence enough to have a place in this history.

On that day colonel James came to Booth's about nine in the evening, where he stayed for Mrs. James, who did not come till near eleven. The four masques then set out together in several chairs; and all proceeded to the Hay-Market.

When they arrived at the Opera-House, the colonel and Mrs. James presently left them; nor did Booth and his lady remain long together, but were soon divided from each other by different masques.

A domino soon accosted the lady, and had her away to the upper end of the furthest room on the right hand, where both the masques sat down: nor was it long before the he domino began to make very fervent love to the she. It would, perhaps, be tedious to the reader to run through the whole process, which was not indeed in the most romantick stile. The lover seemed to consider his mistress as a mere woman of this world, and seemed rather to apply to her avarice and ambition, than to her softer passions.

As he was not so careful to conceal his true voice as the lady was, she soon discovered that this lover of hers was no other than her old friend the peer, and presently a thought suggested itself to her of making an advantage of this accident. She gave him therefore an intimation that she knew him, and expressed some astonishment at his having found her out. 'I suspect, says she, my lord, that you have a friend in the woman where I now lodge, as well as you had in Mrs. Ellison.' My lord protested the contrary — To which she answered, 'Nay, my lord, do not defend her so earnestly, till you are sure I should have been angry with her.'

At these words, which were accompanied with a very bewitching softness, my lord flew into raptures rather

rather too strong for the place he was in. These the lady gently checked, and begged him to take care they were not observed; for that her husband, for aught she knew, was then in the room.

Colonel James came now up, and said, 'So, madam, I have the good fortune to find you again; I have been extremely miserable since I lost you.' The lady answered in her masquerade voice, that she did not know him. 'I am colonel James,' said he, in a whisper. 'Indeed, sir,' answered she, you are mistaken, I have no acquaintance with any colonel James.' 'Madam,' answered he, in a whisper likewise, 'I am positive I am not mistaken, you are certainly Mrs. Booth.'—'Indeed, sir,' said she, 'you are very impertinent, and I beg you will leave me.' My lord then interposed, and speaking in his own voice, assured the colonel that the lady was a woman of quality, and that they were engaged in a conversation together; upon which, the colonel asked the lady's pardon; for as there was nothing remarkable in her dress, he really believed he had been mistaken.

He then went again a hunting through the rooms, and soon after found Booth walking without his mask between two ladies, one of whom was in a blue domino, and the other in the dress of a shepherdess. 'Will,' cries the colonel, 'do you know what is become of our wives; for I have seen neither of them since we have been in the room? Booth answered, that he supposed they were both together, and they should find them both by and by.' 'What,' cries the lady in the blue domino, 'are you both come upon duty then with your wives? as for your's, Mr. Alderman, said she to the colonel, I make no question but she is got into much better company than her husband's. 'How can you be so cruel, madam, said the shepherdess, you will make him beat his wife by and by, for he's a military man I assure you.' 'In the trained bands, I presume,' cries the domino, 'for he is plainly dated from the city.' '——I own, indeed, cries the other, the gentleman smells strongly of Thames-street, and, if I may venture

'venture to guess, of the honourable calling of a taylor.'

'Why, what the devil hast thou picked up here?' cries James.

'Upon my soul, I don't know,' answered Booth; 'I wish you would take one of them at least.'

'What say you, madam,' cries the domino, 'will you go with the colonel? I assure you, you have mistaken your man, for he is no less a person than the great Colonel James himself.'

'No wonder, then, that Mr. Booth gives him his choice of us; it is the proper office of a caterer, in which capacity Mr. Booth hath, I am told, the honour to serve the noble colonel.'

'Much good may it do you with your ladies,' said James, 'I will go in pursuit of better game. At which words he walked off.'

'You are a true sportsman,' cries the shepherdess; 'for your only pleasure, I believe, lies in the pursuit.'

'Do you know the gentleman, madam?' cries the domino.

'Who doth not know him?' answered the shepherdess.

'What is his character?' cries the domino; 'for, though I have jested with him, I only know him by fight.'

'I know nothing very particular in his character,' cries the shepherdess. 'He gets every handsome woman he can, and so they do all.'

'I suppose then he is not married,' said the domino.

'O yes, and married for love too,' answered the other; 'but he hath loved away all his love for her long ago, and now, he says, she makes as fine an object of hatred.—I think, if the fellow ever appears to have any wit, it is when he abuses his wife, and, luckily for him, that is his favourite topic.—I don't know the poor wretch, but as he describes her, it is a miserable animal.'

'I know her very well,' cries the other, 'and I am much mistaken if she is not even with him: but hang him, what is become of Booth?'

At this instant a great noise arose near that part where the two ladies were. This was occasioned by a large assembly of young fellows, whom they call bucks, who were got together, and were enjoying, as the phrase is, a letter, which one of them had found in the room.

Curiosity had its votaries among all ranks of people; whenever therefore an object of this appears, it is as sure of attracting a croud in the assemblies of the polite, as in those of their inferiors.

When this croud was gathered together, one of the bucks, at the desire of his companions, as well as of all present, performed the part of a public orator, and read out the following letter, which we shall give the reader, together with the comments of the orator himself, and of all his audience.

The orator then, being mounted on a bench, began as follows:

‘ Here beginneth the third chapter of——saint
‘ —Pox on’t, Jack, what is the saint’s name? I have
‘ forgot.’

‘ Timothy, you blockhead,’ answered another——
‘ Timothy.’

‘ Well, then,’ cries the orator, ‘ of Saint Timothy.’

‘ Sir, I am very sorry to have any occasion of
‘ writing on the following subject, in a country that
‘ is honoured with the name of christian; much
‘ more am I concerned to address myself to a man
‘ whose many advantages, derived both from nature
‘ and fortune, should demand the highest return of
‘ gratitude to the great giver of all those good things.
‘ Is not such a man guilty of the highest ingratitude
‘ to that most beneficent being, by a direct and
‘ avowed disobedience of his most positive laws and
‘ commands?’

‘ I need not tell you that adultery is forbid in the
‘ laws of the decalogue, nor need I, I hope, mention
‘ that it is as expressly forbid in the New Testament.’

“ You see therefore,” said the orator, “ what
“ the law is, and therefore none of you will be
“ able

“able to plead ignorance, when you come to the
“Old Baily in the other world.—But here goes
“again.—

“If it had not been so expressly forbidden in scripture, still the law of nature would have yielded light enough for us to have discovered the great horror and atrociousness of this crime.

“And accordingly we find, that nations where the sun of righteousness hath yet never shined, have punished the adulterer with the most exemplary pains and penalties; not only the polite heathens, but the most barbarous nations have concurred in these; in many places, the most severe and shameful corporal punishments, and in some, and those not a few, Death itself hath been inflicted on this crime.

“And sure in a human sense there is scarce any guilt which deserves to be more severely punished. It includes in it almost every injury and every mischief which one man can do to, or can bring on another. It is robbing him of his property.

“Mind that, ladies,” said the orator, “you are all the property of your husbands;” “and of that property, which, if he is a good man, he values above all others. It is poisoning that fountain whence he hath a right to derive the sweetest and most innocent pleasure, the most cordial comfort, the most solid friendship, and most faithful assistance in all his affairs, wants, and distresses. It is the destruction of his peace of mind, and even of his reputation. The ruin of both wife and husband, and sometimes of the whole family, are the probable consequence of this fatal injury. Domestic happiness is the end of almost all our pursuits, and the common reward of all our pains. When men find themselves forever barred from this delightful fruition, they are lost to all industry, and grow careless of all their worldly affairs. Thus they become bad subjects, bad relations, bad friends, and bad men. Hatred and revenge are the wretched passions which boil in their minds. Despair and madness very commonly ensue, and murder and suicide often close the dreadful scene.

“Thus

“ Thus, gentlemen, and ladies, you see the scene
“ is closed. So here ends the first act—and thus
“ begins the second.

‘ I have here attempted to lay before you a picture
‘ of this vice, the horror of which no colours of mind
‘ can exaggerate. But what pencil can delineate the
‘ horrors of that punishment which the scripture de-
‘ nounces against it!

‘ And for what will you subject yourself to this
‘ punishment? or for what reward will you inflict all
‘ this misery on another? I will add, on your friend?
‘ for the possession of a woman; for the pleasure of a
‘ moment? But if neither virtue nor religion can re-
‘ strain your inordinate appetites, are there not many
‘ women as handsome as your friend’s wife, whom,
‘ though not with innocence, you may possess with a
‘ much less degree of guilt? What motive then can
‘ thus hurry you on to the destruction of yourself and
‘ your friend? doth the peculiar rankness of the
‘ guilt add any zest to the sin? doth it enhance the
‘ pleasure as much as we may be assured it will the
‘ punishment?

‘ But if you can be so lost to all sense of fear, and
‘ of shame, and of goodness, as not to be debarred
‘ by the evil which you are to bring on yourself, by
‘ the extreme baseness of the action, nor by the ruin
‘ in which you are to involve others, let me still urge
‘ the difficulty, I may say the impossibility, of the suc-
‘ cess. You are attacking a fortress on a rock; a
‘ chastity so strongly defended, as well by a happy
‘ natural disposition of mind as by the strongest prin-
‘ ciples of religion and virtue, implanted by educa-
‘ tion, and nourished and improved by habit, that
‘ the woman must be invincible even without that
‘ firm and constant affection of her husband, which
‘ would guard a much looser and worse-disposed heart.
‘ What therefore are you attempting but to intro-
‘ duce distrust, and perhaps disunion, between an in-
‘ nocent and a happy couple, in which too you can-
‘ not succeed without bringing, I am convinced, cer-
‘ tain destruction on your own head?

‘ Desist,

‘ Desist, therefore, let me advise you, from this enormous crime ; retreat from the vain attempt of climbing a precipice, which it is impossible you should ever ascend, where you must probably soon fall into utter perdition, and can have no other hope but of dragging down your best friend into perdition with you.

‘ I can think of but one argument more, and that, indeed, a very bad one. you throw away that time in an impossible attempt, which might, in other places, crown your sinful endeavours with success.

“ And so ends the dismal ditty.”

‘ D—n me,’ cries one, ‘ did ever mortal hear such d—n’d stuff?’

‘ Upon my soul,’ said another, ‘ I like the last argument well enough. There is some sense in that : for d—n me if I had not rather go to D—g—fs at any time, than to follow a virtuous b—— for a fortnight.’

‘ Tom,’ says one of them, ‘ let us set the ditty to musick ; let us subscribe to have it set by Handel ; it will make an excellent oratorio.’

‘ D—n me, Jack,’ says another, ‘ we’ll have it set to a psalm tune, and we’ll sing it next Sunday at St. James’s church, and I’ll bear a bob, d—n me.’

‘ Fie upon it, gentlemen, fie upon it,’ said a frier who came up, ‘ do you think there is any wit and humour in this ribaldry ; or, if there were, would it make any atonement for abusing religion and virtue?’

‘ Hey day!’ cries one, ‘ this is a frier in good earnest.’

‘ Whatever I am,’ said the frier, ‘ I hope at least, you are not what you appear to be. Heaven forbid, for the sake of our posterity, that you should be gentlemen.’

‘ Jack,’ cries one, ‘ let us toss the frier in a blanket.’

‘ Me in a blanket!’ said the frier, ‘ by the dignity of man, I will twist the neck of every one of you as sure as ever the neck of a dunghil-cock was twisted.’

At which words he pulled off his masque, and the tremendous majesty of colonel Bath appeared, from which the bucks fled away as fast as the Trojans heretofore from the face of Achilles. The colonel did not think it worth while to pursue any other of them except him who had the letter in his hand, which the colonel desired to see, and the other delivered, saying it was very much at his service.

The colonel, being possessed of the letter, retired as privately as he could, in order to give it a careful perusal; for badly as it had been read by the orator, there were some passages in it which had pleased the colonel. He had just gone through it, when Booth passed by him; upon which, the colonel called to him, and delivering him the letter, bid him put it in his pocket, and read it at his leisure. He made many encomiums upon it, and told Booth it would be of service to him, and was proper for all young men to read.

Booth had not yet seen his wife; but as he concluded she was safe with Mrs. James, he was not uneasy. He had been prevented in searching farther after her, by the lady of the blue domino, who had joined him again. Booth had now made these discoveries; that the lady was pretty well acquainted with him; that she was a woman of fashion; and that she had a particular regard for him. But though he was a gay man, he was in reality so fond of his Amelia, that he thought of no other woman; wherefore, though not absolutely a Joseph, as we have already seen, yet could he not be guilty of premeditated inconstancy. He was indeed so very cold and insensible to the hints which were given him, that the lady began to complain of his dulness. When the shepherdess again came up, and heard this accusation against him, she confirmed it, saying: 'I do assure you, madam, he is the dullest fellow in the world. ' Indeed, I should almost take you for his wife, by finding you a second time with him; for I do assure you the gentleman very seldom keeps any other company.' 'Are you so well acquainted with him, madam?' said the domino. 'I have had that honour

‘nour longer than your ladyship, I believe,’ answered the shepherdess. ‘Possibly you may, madam,’ cries the domino, ‘but I wish you would not interrupt us at present; for we have some business together.’ ‘I believe, madam,’ answered the shepherdess, ‘my business with the gentleman is altogether as important as yours; and therefore your ladyship may withdraw if you please.’—‘My dear ladies,’ cries Booth, ‘I beg you will not quarrel about me.’—‘Not at all,’ answered the domino, ‘since you are so indifferent, I resign my pretensions with all my heart. If you had not been the dullest fellow upon earth, I am convinced you must have discovered me.’—She then went off muttering to herself, that she was satisfied the shepherdess was some wretched creature whom nobody knew.

The shepherdess overheard the sarcasm, and answered it, by asking Booth what contemptible wretch he had picked up. ‘Indeed, madam,’ said he, ‘you know as much of her as I do; she is a masquerade acquaintance like yourself.’ ‘Like me!’ repeated she. ‘Do you think if this had been our first acquaintance, I should have wasted so much time with you as I have? for your part, indeed, I believe a woman will get very little advantage by her having been formerly intimate with you.’ ‘I do not know, madam,’ said Booth, ‘that I deserve that character, any more than I know the person that now gives it me.’ ‘And you have the assurance then,’ said she in her own voice, ‘to affect not to remember me.’ ‘I think,’ cries Booth, ‘I have heard that voice before; but, upon my soul, I do not recollect it.’ ‘Do you recollect,’ said she, ‘no woman that you have used with the highest barbarity? I will not say ingratitude.’ ‘No, upon my honour,’ answered Booth. ‘Mention not honour,’ said she, ‘thou wretch: for hardened as thou art, I could shew thee a face, that, in spite of thy consummate impudence, would confound thee with shame and horror. Do’st thou not yet know me?’ ‘I do, madam, indeed,’ answered Booth; ‘and I confess, that

‘ that of all women in the world you have the most reason for what you saic.’

Here a long dialogue ensued between the gentleman and the lady, whom, I suppose, I need not mention to have been Miss Matthews; but as it consisted chiefly of violent upbraidings on her side, and excuses on his, I despair of making it entertaining to the reader; and shall therefore return to the colonel, who having searched all the rooms with the utmost diligence, without finding the woman he looked for, began to suspect that he had before fixed on the right person, and that Amelia had denied herself to him, being pleased with her paramour, whom he had discovered to be the noble peer.

He resolved therefore, as he could have no sport himself, to spoil that of others; accordingly he found out Booth, and asked him again what was become of both their wives; for that he had searched all over the rooms, and could find neither of them?

Booth was now a little alarmed at this account, and parting with Miss Matthews, went along with the colonel in search of his wife. As for Miss Matthews, he had at length pacified her with a promise to make her a visit; which promise she extorted from him, swearing bitterly in the most solemn manner, unless he made it to her, she would expose both him and herself at the masquerade.

As he knew the violence of the lady’s passions, and to what heights they were capable of rising, he was obliged to come into these terms; for he had, I am convinced, no fear upon earth equal to that of Amelia’s knowing what it was in the power of Miss Matthews to communicate to her, and which to conceal from her, he had already undergone so much uneasiness.

The colonel led Booth to the place where he had seen the peer and Amelia (such he was now well convinced she was) sitting together. Booth no sooner saw her, than he said to the colonel, ‘ Sure that is my wife in conversation with that masque’—‘ I took her for your lady myself,’ said the colonel; ‘ but I found I was mistaken.—(Hark ye, that is my lord —, and I have seen that very lady with him all this night.)’

This

This conversation past at a little distance, and out of the hearing of the supposed Amelia; when Booth looking stedfastly at the lady, declared with an oath, that he was positive the colonel was in the right. She then beckoned to him with her fan; upon which, he went directly to her; and she asked him to go home, which he very readily consented to. The peer then walked off; the colonel went in pursuit of his wife, or of some other woman; and Booth and his lady returned in two chairs to their lodgings.

C H A P. III.

Consequences of the masquerade, not uncommon nor surprising.

THE lady getting first out of her chair, ran hastily up into the nursery to the children; for such was Amelia's constant method at her return home, at whatever hour. Booth then walked into the dining-room, where he had not been long before Amelia came down to him, and with a most chearful countenance, said, 'My dear, I fancy we have neither of us supped; shall I go down and see whether there is any cold meat in the house?'

'For yourself, if you please,' answered Booth; 'but I shall eat nothing.'

'How, my dear,' said Amelia, 'I hope you have not lost your appetite at the masquerade?' For supper was a meal at which he generally eat very heartily.

'I know not well what I have lost,' said Booth; 'I find myself disordered. My head aches. I know not what is the matter with me.'

'Indeed, my dear, you frighten me,' said Amelia; 'you look indeed disordered. I wish the masquerade had been far enough, before you had gone thither.'

'Would to Heaven it had,' cries Booth; 'but that is over now. But pray, Amelia, answer me one question, who was that gentleman with you, when I came up to you?'

'The gentleman, my dear?' said Amelia, 'what gentleman?'

‘ The gentleman, the nobleman, when I came up; sure I speak plain.’

‘ Upon my word, my dear, I don’t understand you,’ answered she; ‘ I did not know one person at the masquerade.’

‘ How!’ said he, ‘ what, spend the whole evening with a masque without knowing him?’

‘ Why, my dear,’ said she, ‘ you know we were not together.’

‘ I know we were not,’ said he; ‘ but what is that to the purpose? sure you answer me strangely. I know we were not together; and therefore I ask you whom you were with?’

‘ Nay, but, my dear,’ said she, ‘ can I tell people in masques?’

‘ I say again, madam,’ said he, ‘ would you converse two hours or more with a masque whom you did not know?’

‘ Indeed, child,’ says she, ‘ I know nothing of the methods of a masquerade; for I never was at one in my life.’

‘ I wish to Heaven you had not been at this,’ cries Booth. ‘ Nay, you will wish so yourself, if you tell me truth.—What have I said? do I, can I, suspect you of not speaking truth?—Since you are ignorant then I will inform you, the man you have conversed with was no other than lord ——.’

‘ And is that the reason,’ said she, ‘ you wish I had not been there?’

‘ And is not that reason,’ answered he, ‘ sufficient? Is he not the last man upon earth with whom I would have you converse?’

‘ So you really wish then that I had not been at the masquerade?’

‘ I do,’ cried he, ‘ from my soul.’

‘ So may I ever be able,’ cried she, ‘ to indulge you in every wish as in this.—I was not there.’

‘ Do not trifle, Amelia,’ cried he; ‘ you would not jest with me, if you knew the situation of my mind.’

‘ Indeed, I do not jest with you,’ said she. ‘ Upon my honour, I was not there. Forgive me this first deceit I ever practised, and, indeed, it shall be the last;

‘last; for I have paid severely for this by the uneasiness it hath given me.’ She then revealed to him the whole secret, which was thus:

I think it hath been already mentioned in some part of this history, that Amelia and Mrs. Atkinson were exactly of the same make and stature, and that there was likewise a very near resemblance between their voices. When Mrs. Atkinson, therefore, found that Amelia was so extremely averse to the masquerade, she proposed to go thither in her stead, and to pass upon Booth for his own wife.

This was afterwards very easily executed; for when they left Booth’s lodgings, Amelia, who went last to her chair, ran back to fetch her masque, as she pretended, which she had purposely left behind. She then whipt off her domino, and threw it over Mrs. Atkinson, who stood ready to receive it, and ran immediately down stairs, and stepping into Amelia’s chair, proceeded with the rest to the masquerade.

As her stature exactly suited that of Amelia, she had very little difficulty to carry on the imposition; for, besides the natural resemblance of their voices, and the opportunity of speaking in a feigned one, she had scarce an intercourse of six words with Booth during the whole time; for the moment they got into the croud, she took the first opportunity of slipping from him. And he, as the reader may remember, being seized by other women, and concluding his wife to be safe with Mrs. James, was very well satisfied, till the colonel set him upon the search, as we have seen before.

Mrs. Atkinson, the moment she came home, ran up stairs to the nursery, where she found Amelia, and told her in haste that she might very easily carry on the deceit with her husband; for that she might tell him what she pleased to invent, as they had not been a minute together during the whole evening.

Booth was no sooner satisfied that his wife had not been from home that evening, than he fell into raptures with her, gave her a thousand tender caresses, blamed his own judgment, acknowledged the goodness

of hers, and vowed never to oppose her will more in any one instance during his life.

Mrs. Atkinson, who was still in the nursery with her masquerade dress, was then summoned down stairs; and when Booth saw her, and heard her speak in her mimic tone, he declared he was not surprised at his having been imposed upon; for that if they were both in the same disguise, he should scarce be able to discover the difference between them.

They then sat down to half an hour's chearful conversation; after which, they retired all in the most perfect good humour.

C H A P. IV.

Consequences of the masquerade.

WHEN Booth rose in the morning, he found in his pocket that letter which had been delivered to him by Colonel Bath, which, had not chance brought to his remembrance, he might possibly have never recollected.

He had now, however, the curiosity to open the letter, and beginning to read it, the matter of it drew him on, till he perused the whole; for, notwithstanding the contempt cast upon it by those learned critics the bucks, neither the subject, nor the manner in which it was treated, was altogether contemptible.

But there was still another motive which induced Booth to read the whole letter; and this was, that he presently thought he knew the hand. He did, indeed, immediately conclude it was Dr. Harrison; for the doctor wrote a very remarkable one; and this letter contained all the particularities of the doctor's character.

He had just finished a second reading of this letter, when the doctor himself entered the room. The good man was impatient to know the success of Amelia's stratagem; for he bore towards her all that love which esteem can create in a good mind, without the assistance of those selfish considerations, from which the love

love of wives and children may be ordinarily deduced. The latter of which nature; by very subtle and refined reasoning, suggests to us to be part of our dear selves; and the former, as long as they remain the objects of our liking, that same nature is furnished with very plain and fertile arguments, to recommend to our affections. But to raise that affection in the human breast, which the doctor had for Amelia, nature is forced to use a kind of logic, which is no more understood by a bad man, than sir Isaac Newton's doctrine of colours is by one born blind. And yet in reality it contains nothing more abstruse than this, that an injury is the object of anger, danger of fear, and praise of vanity: for in the same simple manner it may be asserted, that goodness is the object of love.

The doctor enquired immediately for his child (for so he often called Amelia); Booth answered, that he had left her asleep; for that she had had but a restless night. 'I hope she is not disordered by the masquerade,' cries the doctor. Booth answered, he believed she would be very well when she waked. 'I fancy,' said he, 'her gentle spirits were a little too much fluttered last night; that is all.'

'I hope then,' said the doctor, 'you will never more insist on her going to such places, but know your own happiness in having a wife that hath the discretion to avoid those places; which, though perhaps they may not be, as some represent them, such brothels of vice and debauchery, as would impeach the character of every virtuous woman who was seen at them, are certainly however scenes of riot, disorder, and intemperance, very improper to be frequented by a chaste and sober christian matron.'

Booth declared, that he was very sensible of his error; and that so far from soliciting his wife to go to another masquerade, he did not intend ever to go thither any more himself.

The doctor highly approved the resolution; and then Booth said: 'And I thank you, my dear friend, as well as my wife's discretion, that she was not at the masquerade last night.' He then related to the

doctor the discovery of the plot; and the good man was greatly pleased with the success of the stratagem, and that Booth took it in such good part.

‘But, sir,’ says Booth, ‘I had a letter given me by a noble colonel there, which is written in a hand so very like yours, that I could almost swear to it. Nor is the stile, as far as I can guess, unlike your own. Here it is, sir. Do you own the letter, doctor, or do you not?’

The doctor took the letter, and having looked at it a moment, said—‘And did the colonel himself give you this letter?’

‘The colonel himself,’ answered Booth.

‘Why then,’ cries the doctor, ‘he is surely the most impudent fellow that the world ever produced. What did he deliver it with an air of triumph?’

‘He delivered it me with air enough,’ cries Booth, ‘after his own manner, and bid me read it for my edification. To say the truth, I am a little surprised that he should single me out of all mankind to deliver the letter to; I do not think I deserve the character of such a husband. It is well I am not so very forward to take an affront as some folks.’

‘I am glad to see you are not,’ said the doctor; ‘and your behaviour in this affair becomes both the man of sense and the christian: for it would be surely the greatest folly, as well as the most daring impiety, to risque your own life for the impertinence of a fool. As long as you are assured of the virtue of your own wife, it is wisdom in you to despise the efforts of such a wretch. Not indeed that your wife accuses him of any downright attack, though she hath observed enough in his behaviour to give offence to her delicacy.’

‘You astonish me, doctor,’ said Booth. ‘What can you mean? my wife dislike his behaviour! hath the colonel ever offended her?’

‘I do not say he hath ever offended her by any open declarations.—Nor hath he done any thing, which, according to the most romantic notion of honour, you can or ought to resent; but there is something extremely nice in the chastity of a truly virtuous woman.’

‘And

‘ And hath my wife really complained of any thing of that kind in the colonel ?’

‘ Look ye, young gentleman,’ cries the doctor, ‘ I will have no quarrelling, or challenging; I find I have made some mistake, and therefore I insist upon it, by all the rights of friendship, that you give me your word of honour you will not quarrel with the colonel on this account.’

‘ I do with all my heart,’ said Booth; ‘ for if I did not know your character, I should absolutely think you was jesting with me. I do not think you have mistaken my wife, but I am sure she hath mistaken the colonel; and hath misconstrued some overstrained point of gallantry, something of the quixotte kind, into a design against her chastity; but I have that opinion of the colonel, that I hope you will not be offended, when I declare I know not which of you two I should be the sooner jealous of.’

‘ I would by no means have you jealous of any one,’ cries the doctor; ‘ for I think my child’s virtue may be firmly relied on; but I am convinced she would not have said what she did to me, without a cause; nor should I, without such a conviction, have written that letter to the colonel, as I own to you I did. However, nothing I say hath yet past, which, even in the opinion of false honour, you are at liberty to resent; but as to declining any great intimacy, if you will take my advice, I think that would be prudent.’

‘ You will pardon me, my dearest friend,’ said Booth; ‘ but I have really such an opinion of the colonel, that I would pawn my life upon his honour; and as for women, I do not believe he ever had an attachment to any.’

‘ Be it so,’ said the doctor. ‘ I have only two things to insist on. The first is, that if ever you change your opinion, this letter may not be the subject of any quarrelling or fighting; the other is, that you never mention a word of this to your wife. By the latter I shall see whether you can keep a secret; and if it is no otherwise material, it will be a whole-

‘ some exercise to your mind ; for the practice of any
‘ virtue is a kind of mental exercise, and serves to
‘ maintain the health and vigour of the soul.’

‘ I faithfully promise both,’ cries Booth. And now the breakfast entered the room, as did soon after Amelia and Mrs. Atkinson.

The conversation ran chiefly on the masquerade ; and Mrs. Atkinson gave an account of several adventures there ; but whether she told the whole truth with regard to herself, I will not determine. For certain it is, she never once mentioned the name of the noble peer. Amongst the rest, she said there was a young fellow that had preached a sermon there upon a stool, in praise of adultery, she believed ; for she could not get near enough to hear the particulars.

During that transaction, Booth had been engaged with the blue domino in another room, so that he knew nothing of it ; so that, what Mrs. Atkinson had now said, only brought to his mind the doctor’s letter to colonel Bath ; for to him he supposed it was written ; and the idea of the colonel being a lover to Amelia, struck him in so ridiculous a light, that it threw him into a violent fit of laughter.

The doctor, who, from the natural jealousy of an author, imputed the agitation of Booth’s muscles to his own sermon, or letter on that subject, was a little offended, and said gravely : ‘ I should be glad to
‘ know the reason of this immoderate mirth. Is adul-
‘ tery a matter of jest in your opinion ?’

‘ Far otherwise,’ answered Booth. ‘ But how is
‘ it possible to refrain from laughter at the idea of a
‘ fellow preaching a sermon in favour of it at such a
‘ place ?’

‘ I am very sorry,’ cries the doctor, ‘ to find the
‘ age is grown to so scandalous a degree of licentious-
‘ ness, that we have thrown off not only virtue, but
‘ decency. How abandoned must be the manners of
‘ any nation where such insults upon religion and mo-
‘ rality can be committed with impunity ? no man is
‘ sonder of true wit and humour than myself ; but to
‘ profane sacred things with jest and scoffing is a sure
‘ sign of a weak and a wicked mind. It is the very

' vice which Homer attacks in the odious character of
' Therfites. The ladies must excuse my repeating
' the passage to you, as I know you have Greek
' enough to understand it.'

' Ὅς ῥ' ἵπια φρεσὶν ἔσιν ἀκοσμά τε, πολλὰ τε ἔδνη
' Μάψ, ἀτὰρ ἔ' κατὰ κόσμον ἐριζέμεναι βασιλιῦσιν,
' Ἀλλ' ὅτι οἱ εἰσαίθε γελοῖσιν Ἀργείοισιν
' Ἑμμεναι [a].

' And immediately adds,

' ——— αἰσχισθ' δὲ ἀνὴρ ὑπὸ Ἰλίου ἦλθε [b].

' Horace again describes such a rascal.

' ——— Solutos

' *Qui captat risus hominum famamque dicacis* [c].

' And says of him,

' —*Hic niger est, hunc tu, Romane, carveto* [d].

' O charming Homer!' said Mrs. Atkinson, ' how
' much above all other writers!'

' I ask your pardon, madam,' said the doctor, ' I
' forgot you was a scholar; but, indeed, I did not
' know you understood Greek as well as Latin.'

' I do not pretend,' said she, ' to be a critic in the
' Greek; but I think I am able to read a little of Ho-
' mer, at least with the help of looking now and then
' into the Latin.'

' Pray, madam,' said the doctor, ' how do you
' like this passage in the speech of Hector to Andro-
' mache?'

[a] Thus paraphrased by Mr. Pope.

"Aw'd by no shame, by no respect control'd,

"In scandal busy, in reproaches bold:

"With witty malice studious to defame,

"Scorn all his joy, and laughter all his aim."

[b] "He was the greatest scoundrel in the whole army."

[c] "Who trivial bursts of laughter strives to raise,

"And courts of prating petulance the praise."

FRANCIS.

[d] "This man is black, do thou, O Roman, shun this man."

' ——— *Es*

* — Εἰς οἶκον ἴσα τὰ σαυτῆς ἔργα κόμιζε,
 * Ἴσθι τ' ἡλακώτην τε, καὶ ἀμφοτέροισι κέλευε
 * Ἔργον ἐποιχεσθαι *.

‘ Or how do you like the character of Hippodamia, who, by being the prettiest girl, and best workwoman of her age, got one of the best husbands in all Troy.—I think, indeed, Homer enumerates her discretion with her other qualifications; but I do not remember he gives us one character of a woman of learning.—Don’t you conceive this to be a great omission in that charming poet? However, Juvenal makes you amends, for he talks very abundantly of the learning of the Roman ladies in his time.’

‘ You are a provoking man, doctor,’ said Mrs. Atkinson. ‘ Where is the harm in a woman’s having learning as well as a man?’

‘ Let me ask you another question,’ said the doctor. ‘ Where is the harm in a man’s being a fine performer with a needle as well as a woman? And yet, answer me honestly, would you greatly chuse to marry a man with a thimble upon his finger? Would you in earnest think a needle became the hand of your husband as well as a halberd?’

‘ As to war, I am with you,’ said she. ‘ Homer himself, I well remember, makes Hector tell his wife, that warlike works ——— What is the Greek word ——— Polemy ——— something ——— belonged to men only; and I readily agree to it. I hate a masculine woman, an Amazon, as much as you can do: but what is there masculine in learning?’

‘ Nothing so masculine, take my word for it. As for your Polemy, I look upon it to be the true cha-

* “ Go home and mind your own business. Follow your spinning, and keep your maids to their work.”

‘ racteristic

‘characteristic of a devil. So Homer every where characterises Mars.’

‘Indeed, my dear,’ cries the serjeant, ‘you had better not dispute with the doctor; for upon my word, he will be too hard for you.’

‘Nay, I beg you will not interfere,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson, ‘I am sure, you can be no judge in these matters.’

At which the doctor and Booth burst into a loud laugh; and Amelia, though fearful of giving her friend offence, could not forbear a gentle smile.

‘You may laugh, gentlemen, if you please,’ said Mrs. Atkinson; ‘but I thank Heaven, I have married a man who is not jealous of my understanding. I should have been the most miserable woman upon earth with a starched pedant, who was possessed of that nonsensical opinion, that the difference of sexes causes any difference in the mind. Why don’t you honestly avow the Turkish notion, that women have no souls; for you say the same thing in effect?’

‘Indeed, my dear,’ cries the serjeant, greatly concerned to see his wife so angry, ‘you have mistaken the doctor.’

‘I beg, my dear,’ cries she, ‘you will say nothing upon these subjects.—I hope you at least do not despise my understanding.’

‘I assure you I do not,’ said the serjeant, ‘and I hope you will never despise mine; for a man may have some understanding, I hope, without learning.’

Mrs. Atkinson reddened extremely at these words; and the doctor, fearing he had gone too far, began to soften matters, in which Amelia assisted him. By these means, the storm rising in Mrs. Atkinson before was in some measure laid, at least suspended from bursting at present; but it fell afterwards upon the poor serjeant’s head in a torrent; who had learned perhaps one maxim from his trade, that a cannon-ball always doth mischief in proportion to the resistance it meets with; and that nothing so effectually deadens its force as a wool-pack. The serjeant therefore bore all with patience; and the idea of a wool-pack, perhaps, bringing that of a feather-bed into his head, he

at

at last not only quieted his wife; but she cried out with great sincerity, 'Well, my dear, I will say one thing for you, that I believe from my soul, though you have no learning, you have the best understanding of any man upon earth; and I must own I think the latter far more profitable of the two.'

Far different was the idea she entertained of the doctor, whom, from this day, she considered as a conceited pedant; nor could all Amelia's endeavours ever alter her sentiments.

The doctor now took his leave of Booth and his wife for a week, he intending to set out within an hour or two with his old friend, with whom our readers were a little acquainted at the latter end of the ninth book, and of whom, perhaps, they did not then conceive the most favourable opinion.

Nay, I am aware that the esteem which some readers before had for the doctor, may here be lessened; since he may appear to have been too easy a dupe to the gross flattery of the old gentleman. If there be any such critics, we are heartily sorry as well for them as for the doctor; but it is our business to discharge the part of a faithful historian, and to describe human nature as it is, not as we would wish it to be.

CH A P. V.

In which Colonel Bath appears in great glory.

THAT afternoon, as Booth was walking in the Park, he met with Colonel Bath, who presently asked him for the letter which he had given him the night before; upon which Booth immediately returned it.

'Don't you think,' cries Bath, 'it is writ with great dignity of expression and emphasis of—of—of judgment?'

'I am surpris'd, though,' cries Booth, 'that any one should write such a letter to you, colonel.'

'To me?' said Bath. — 'What do you mean, sir, I hope you don't imagine any man durst write such

‘such a letter to me? d—n me, if I knew a man who thought me capable of debauching my friend’s wife, I would—— d—n me.’

‘I believe, indeed, sir,’ cries Booth, ‘that no man living dares put his name to such a letter: but you see it is anonymous.’

‘I don’t know what you mean by ominous,’ cries the colonel: ‘but, blast my reputation, if I had received such a letter, if I would not have searched the world to have found the writer. D—n me, I would have gone to the East-Indies to have pulled off his nose.’

‘He would, indeed, have deserved it,’ cries Booth. — ‘But pray, sir, how came you by it?’

‘I took it,’ said the colonel, ‘from a sett of idle young rascals, one of whom was reading it out aloud upon a stool, while the rest were attempting to make a jest, not only of the letter, but of all decency, virtue and religion. A sett of fellows that you must have seen or heard of about town, that are, d—n me, a disgrace to the dignity of manhood; puppies that mistake noise and impudence, rudeness and profaneness, for wit. If the drummers of my company had not more understanding than twenty such fellows, I’d have them both whipt out of the regiment.’

‘So then you do not know the person to whom it was writ?’ said Booth.

‘Lieutenant,’ cries the colonel, ‘your question deserves no answer. I ought to take time to consider whether I ought not to resent the supposition. Do you think, sir, I am acquainted with a rascal?’

‘I do not suppose, colonel,’ cries Booth, ‘that you would willingly cultivate an intimacy with such a person; but a man must have good luck, who hath any acquaintance, if there are not some rascals among them.’

‘I am not offended with you, child,’ says the colonel. ‘I know you did not intend to offend me.’

‘No man, I believe, dares intend it,’ said Booth.

‘I believe so too,’ said the colonel, ‘d—n me, I know it. But you know, child, how tender I am on
‘ this

‘ this subject. If I had been ever married myself, I should have cleft the man’s skull who had dared look wantonly at my wife.’

‘ It is certainly the most cruel of all injuries,’ said Booth. ‘ How finely doth Shakespeare express it in his Othello !

“ But there, where I had treasur’d up my soul.”

‘ That Shakespeare,’ cries the colonel, ‘ was a fine fellow. He was a very pretty poet indeed. Was it not Shakespeare that wrote the play about Hotspur ; you must remember these lines. I got them almost by heart at the play-house ; for I never missed that play whenever it was acted, if I was in town.

“ By Heav’n it was an easy leap,

“ To pluck bright honour into the full moon,

“ Or drive into the bottomless deep.”

‘ And—and—faith, I have almost forgot them ; but I know it is something about saving your honour from drowning—— O it is very fine. I say, d—n me, the man that writ those lines was the greatest poet the world ever produced. There is dignity of expression and emphasis of thinking, d—n me.’

Booth assented to the colonel’s criticism, and then cried, ‘ I wish, colonel, you would be so kind to give me that letter.’ The colonel answered, if he had any particular use for it, he would give it him with all his heart, and presently delivered it ; and soon afterwards they parted.

Several passages now struck all at once upon Booth’s mind, which gave him great uneasiness. He became confident now that he had mistaken one colonel for another ; and though he could not account for the letter’s getting into those hands from whom Bath had taken it (indeed James had dropt it out of his pocket) yet a thousand circumstances left him no room to doubt the identity of the person, who was a man much more liable to raise the suspicion of a husband than honest Bath,

ath, who would at any time have rather fought with man than lain with a woman.

The whole behaviour of Amelia now rushed upon his memory. Her resolution not to take up her residence at the colonel's house; her backwardness even to dine there, her unwillingness to go to the masquerade, many of her unguarded expressions, and some where she had been more guarded, all joined together to raise such an idea in Mr. Booth, that he had almost taken a resolution to go and cut the colonel to pieces in his own house. Cooler thoughts, however, suggested themselves to him in time. He recollected the promise he had so solemnly made to the doctor. He considered, moreover, that he was yet in the dark, as to the extent of the colonel's guilt. Having nothing therefore to fear from it, he contented himself to postpone a resentment, which he nevertheless resolved to take of the colonel hereafter, if he found he was in any degree a delinquent.

The first step he determined to take, was, on the first opportunity, to relate to Colonel James the means by which he came possessed of the letter, and to read it to him. On which occasion, he thought, he should easily discern, by the behaviour of the colonel, whether he had been suspected, either by Amelia or the doctor, without a cause: but as for his wife, he fully resolved not to reveal the secret to her till the doctor's return.

While Booth was deeply engaged by himself in these meditations, Captain Trent came up to him, and familiarly slapped him on the shoulder.

They were soon joined by a third gentleman, and presently afterwards by a fourth, both acquaintances of Mr. Trent; and all having walked twice the length of the Mall together, it being now past nine in the evening, Trent proposed going to the tavern, to which the strangers immediately consented; and Booth himself, after some resistance, was at length persuaded to comply.

To the King's-arms then they went, where the bottle went very briskly round till after eleven; at which time, Trent proposed a game at cards, to which proposal

proposal likewise Booth's consent was obtained, though not without much difficulty; for though he had naturally some inclination to gaming, and had formerly a little indulged it, yet he had entirely left it off for many years.

Booth and his friend were partners, and had at first some success; but fortune, according to her usual conduct, soon shifted about, and persecuted Booth with such malice, that in about two hours he was stripped of all the gold in his pocket, which amounted to twelve guineas, being more than half the cash which he was at that time worth.

How easy it is for a man, who is at all tainted with the itch of gaming, to leave off play in such a situation, especially when he is likewise heated with liquor, I leave to the gamesters to determine. Certain it is, that Booth had no inclination to desist; but, on the contrary, was so eagerly bent on playing on, that he called his friend out of the room, and asked him for ten pieces, which he promised punctually to pay the next morning.

Trent chid him for using so much formality on the occasion. 'You know,' said he, 'dear Booth, you may have what money you please of me. Here is a twenty pound note, at your service, and if you want five times the sum, it is at your service. We will never let these fellows go away with our money in this manner; for we have so much the advantage, that if the knowing ones were here, they would lay odds of our side.'

But if this was really Mr. Trent's opinion, he was very much mistaken; for the other two honourable gentlemen were not only greater masters of the game, and somewhat soberer than poor Booth, having with all the art in their power evaded the bottle; but they had moreover another small advantage over their adversaries, both of them, by means of some certain private signs, previously agreed upon between them, being always acquainted with the principal cards in each other's hands. It cannot be wondered therefore, that fortune was on their side; for however she may be reported to favour fools, she never, I believe, shews them

them any countenance when they engage in play with knaves.

The more Booth lost, the deeper he made his bets; the consequence of which was, that about two in the morning, besides the loss of his own money, he was fifty pounds indebted to Trent. A sum, indeed, which he would not have borrowed, had not the other, like a very generous friend, pushed it upon him.

Trent's pockets became at last dry, by means of these loans. His own loss indeed was trifling; for the stakes of the games were no higher than crowns; and betting (as it is called) was that to which Booth owed his ruin. The gentlemen, therefore, pretty well knowing Booth's circumstances, and being kindly unwilling to win more of a man than he was worth, declined playing any longer, nor did Booth once ask them to persist; for he was ashamed of the debt which he had already contracted to Trent, and very far from desiring to encrease it.

The company then separated. The two victors and Trent went off in their chairs to their several houses near Grosvenor-square; and poor Booth, in a melancholy mood, walked home to his lodgings. He was indeed in such a fit of despair, that it more than once came into his head to put an end to his miserable being.

But, before we introduce him to Amelia, we must do her the justice to relate the manner in which she spent this unhappy evening. It was about seven when Booth left her to walk in the Park: from this time, till past eight, she was employed with her children, in playing with them, in giving them their supper, and in putting them to bed.

When these offices were performed, she employed herself another hour in cooking up a little supper for her husband, this being, as we have already observed, his favourite meal, as indeed it was her's; and, in a most pleasant and delightful manner, they generally passed their time at this season, though their fare was very seldom of the sumptuous kind.

It now grew dark, and her hashed mutton was ready for the table; but no Booth appeared. Having

ing waited therefore for him a full hour, she gave him over for that evening; nor was she much alarmed at his absence, as she knew he was, in a night or two, to be at the tavern with some brother officers: she concluded therefore that they had met in the Park, and had agreed to spend this evening together.

At ten then she sat down to supper by herself; for Mrs. Atkinson was then abroad. And here we cannot help relating a little incident, however trivial it may appear to some. Having sat some time alone reflecting on their distressed situation, her spirits grew very low; and she was once or twice a going to ring the bell, to send her maid for half a pint of white-wine; but checked her inclination, in order to save the little sum of sixpence; which she did the more resolutely, as she had before refused to gratify her children with tarts for their supper, from the same motive. And this self-denial she was very probably practising, to save sixpence; while her husband was paying a debt of several guineas, incurred by the ace of trumps being in the hands of his adversary.

Instead therefore of this cordial, she took up one of the excellent Farquhar's comedies, and read it half through, when the clock striking twelve, she retired to bed, leaving the maid to set up for her master. She would, indeed, have much more willingly have sat up herself; but the delicacy of her own mind assured her, that Booth would not thank her for the compliment. This is indeed a method which some wives take of upbraiding their husbands for staying abroad till too late an hour, and of engaging them, through tenderness and good-nature, never to enjoy the company of their friends too long, when they must do this at the expence of their wives rest.

To bed then she went, but not to sleep. Thrice indeed she told the dismal clock, and as often heard the more dismal watchman, till her miserable husband found his way home, and stole silently, like a thief, to bed to her; at which time pretending then first to wake, she threw her snowy arms around him; though, perhaps, the more witty property of snow, according

to Addison, that is to say, its coldness, rather belonged to the poor captain.

CHAP. VI.

Read, gamester, and observe.

BOOTH could not so well disguise the agitations of his mind from Amelia, but that she perceived sufficient symptoms to assure her that some misfortune had befallen him. This made her in her turn so uneasy, that Booth took notice of it, and after breakfast said, 'Sure, my dear Emily, something hath fallen out to vex you.'

Amelia, looking tenderly at him, answered, 'Indeed, my dear, you are in the right. I am indeed extremely vexed.' 'For heaven's sake,' said he, 'what is it?' 'Nay, my love,' cries she, 'that you must answer yourself. Whatever it is which hath given you all that disturbance that you in vain endeavour to conceal from me, this it is which causes all my affliction.'

'You guess truly, my sweet,' replied Booth; 'I am indeed afflicted, and I will not, nay I cannot, conceal the truth from you. I have undone myself, Amelia.'

'What have you done, child?' said she, in some consternation, 'pray, tell me.'

'I have lost my money at play,' answered he.

'Pugh!' said she, recovering herself,— 'what signifies the trifle you had in your pocket? Resolve never to play again, and let it give you no further vexation; I warrant you, we will contrive some method to repair such a loss.'

'Thou heavenly angel, thou comfort of my soul,' cries Booth, tenderly embracing her— Then starting a little from her arms, and looking with eager fondness in her eyes, he said, 'Let me survey thee; art thou really human, or art thou not rather an angel in a human form?— O, no,' cries he, flying again

again into her arms, 'thou art my dearest woman, my best, my beloved wife.'

Amelia, having returned all his caresses with equal kindness, told him, she had near eleven guineas in her purse, and asked how much she should fetch him.

— 'I would not advise you, Billy, to carry too much in your pocket, for fear it should be a temptation to you to return to gaming, in order to retrieve your past losses. Let me beg you, on all accounts, never to think more, if possible, on the trifle you have lost, any more than if you had never possessed it.'

Booth promised her faithfully he never would, and refused to take any of the money. He then hesitated a moment—and cried— 'You say, my dear, you have eleven guineas; you have a diamond ring likewise, which was your grandmother's, I believe that is worth twenty pounds; and your own and the child's watch are worth as much more.'

'I believe they would sell for as much,' cried Amelia; 'for a pawnbroker of Mrs. Atkinson's acquaintance offered to lend me thirty-five pounds upon them, when you was in your last distress.——But why are you computing their value now?'

'I was only considering,' answered he, 'how much we could raise in any case of exigency.'

'I have computed it myself,' said she; 'and I believe all we have in the world, besides our bare necessary apparel, would produce about sixty pounds: And suppose, my dear,' said she, 'while we have that little sum, we should think of employing it some way or other, to procure some small subsistence for ourselves and our family. As for your dependence on the colonel's friendship, it is all vain, I am afraid, and fallacious. Nor do I see any hopes you have, from any other quarter, of providing for yourself again in the army. And though the sum which is now in our power is very small: yet we may possibly contrive with it to put ourselves into some mean way of livelihood. I have a heart, my Billy, which is capable of undergoing any thing for your sake; and I hope my hands are as able to
' work

‘work, as those which have been more injured to it.
‘But think, my dear, think what must be our wretched
‘condition, when the very little we now have, is all
‘mouldered away, as it will soon be in this town.’

When poor Booth heard this, and reflected that the time which Amelia foresaw was already arrived (for that he had already lost every farthing they were worth), it touched him to the quick; he turned pale, gnashed his teeth, and cried out, ‘Damnation! this
‘is too much to bear.’

Amelia was thrown into the utmost consternation by this behaviour; and, with great terror in her countenance, cried out, ‘Good Heavens! my dear love,
‘what is the reason of this agony?’

‘Ask me no questions,’ cried he, ‘unless you would
‘drive me to madness.’

‘My Billy, my love,’ said she, ‘what can be the
‘meaning of this? — I beg you will deal openly with
‘me, and tell me all your griefs.’

‘Have you dealt fairly with me Amelia?’ said he.

‘Yes surely,’ said she; ‘Heaven is my witness how
‘fairly.’

‘Nay, do not call Heaven,’ cried he, ‘to witness
‘a falsehood. You have not dealt openly with me,
‘Amelia. You have concealed secrets from me; se-
‘crets which I ought to have known, and which, if
‘I had known, it had been better for us both.’

‘You astonish me as much as you shock me,’
cried she. ‘What falsehood, what treachery, have I
‘been guilty of?’

‘You tell me,’ said he, ‘that I can have no re-
‘liance on James; why did you not tell me so be-
‘fore?’

‘I call Heaven again,’ said she, ‘to witness; nay,
‘I appeal to yourself for the truth of it; I have
‘often told you so. I have told you I disliked the
‘man, notwithstanding the many favours he had
‘done you. I desired you not to have too absolute a
‘reliance upon him. I own, I had once an extreme
‘good opinion of him; but I changed it, and I ac-
‘quainted you that I had so——’

‘ But not,’ cries he, ‘ with the reasons why you had changed it.’

‘ I was really afraid, my dear,’ said she, ‘ of going too far. I knew the obligations you had to him; and if I suspected that he acted rather from vanity than true friendship——’

‘ Vanity!’ cries he, ‘ take care, Amelia, you know his motive to be much worse than vanity—— A motive, which, if he had piled obligations on me till they had reached the skies, would tumble all down to hell. It is in vain to conceal it longer—I know all—your confident hath told me all.’

‘ Nay, then,’ cries she, ‘ on my knees I entreat you to be pacified, and hear me out. It was, my dear, for you, my dread of your jealous honour, and the fatal consequences.’

‘ Is not Amelia, then,’ cried he, ‘ equally jealous of my honour! Would she, from a weak tenderness for my person, go privately about to betray, to undermine, the most invaluable treasure of my soul? Would she have me pointed at as the credulous dupe, the easy fool, the tame, the kind cuckold of a rascal, with whom I conversed as a friend?’

‘ Indeed, you injure me,’ said Amelia. ‘ Heaven forbid I should have the trial; but, I think, I could sacrifice all I hold most dear, to preserve your honour. I think, I have shewn I can. But I will—when you are cool, I will—satisfy you I have done nothing you ought to blame.’

‘ I am cool then,’ cries he — ‘ I will with the greatest coolness hear you.——But do not think, Amelia, I have the least jealousy, the least suspicion, the least doubt, of your honour. It is your want of confidence in me alone which I blame.’

‘ When you are calm,’ cried she, ‘ I will speak, and not before.’

He assured her he was calm; and then she said — ‘ You have justified my conduct by your present passion, in concealing from you my suspicions; for they were no more, nay it is possible they were unjust: for since the doctor, in betraying the secret to you, hath so falsified my opinion of him, why may I not
‘ be

‘ be as well deceived in my opinion of the colonel ; since
‘ it was only formed on some particulars in his beha-
‘ viour, which I disliked ? for, upon my honour, he
‘ never spoke a word to me, nor hath been ever
‘ guilty of any direct action which I could blame.’
She then went on, and related most of the circum-
stances which she had mentioned to the doctor, omit-
ting one or two of the strongest, and giving such a
turn to the rest, that, if Booth had not had some of
Othello’s blood in him, his wife would have almost
appeared a prude in his eyes. Even he, however, was
pretty well pacified by this narrative, and said he was
glad to find a possibility of the colonel’s innocence ;
but that he greatly commended the prudence of his
wife, and only wished she would for the future make
him her only confidant.

Amelia, upon that, expressed some bitterness against
the doctor for breaking his trust ; when Booth, in his
excuse, related all the circumstances of the letter, and
plainly convinced her, that the secret had dropt by
mere accident from the mouth of the doctor.

Thus the husband and wife became again reconciled ;
and poor Amelia generously forgave a passion, of which
the sagacious reader is better acquainted with the real
cause, than was that unhappy lady.

C H A P. VII.

In which Booth receives a visit from Captain Trent.

WHEN Booth grew perfectly cool, and be-
gan to reflect that he had broken his word
to the doctor, in having made the discovery to his
wife, which we have seen in the last chapter, that
thought gave him great uneasiness ; and now, to com-
fort him, Captain Trent came to make him a visit.
This was, indeed, almost the last man in the world,
whose company he wished for ; for he was the only
man he was ashamed to see, for a reason well known
to gamblers ; among whom, the most dishonourable
of all things is, not to pay a debt, contracted at the
gaming-table, the next day, or the next time at least
that you see the party.

Booth made no doubt, but that Trent was come on purpose to receive this debt; the latter had been therefore scarce a minute in the room, before Booth began, in an awkward manner, to apologize; but Trent immediately stopt his mouth, and said, 'I do not want the money, Mr. Booth, and you may pay it me whenever you are able; and, if you are never able, I assure you I will never ask you for it.'

This generosity raised such a tempest of gratitude in Booth (if I may be allowed the expression) that the tears burst from his eyes, and it was some time before he could find any utterance for those sentiments with which his mind overflowed; but, when he began to express his thankfulness, Trent immediately stopped him, and gave a sudden turn to their discourse.

Mrs. Trent had been to visit Mrs. Booth on the masquerade evening, which visit Mrs. Booth had not yet returned. Indeed this was only the second day since she had received it. Trent therefore now told his friend, that he should take it extremely kind if he and his lady would wave all ceremony, and sup at their house the next evening. Booth hesitated a moment—but presently said, 'I am pretty certain my wife is not engaged, and I will undertake for her. I am sure she will not refuse any thing Mr. Trent can ask.' And soon after Trent took Booth with him to walk in the Park.

There were few greater lovers of a bottle than Trent; he soon proposed therefore to adjourn to the King's-arms tavern, where Booth, though much against his inclination, accompanied him. But Trent was very importunate, and Booth did not think himself at liberty to refuse such a request to a man from whom he had so lately received such obligations.

When they came to the tavern, however, Booth recollected the omission he had been guilty of the night before. He wrote a short note therefore to his wife, acquainting her, that he should not come home to supper; but comforted her with a faithful promise that he would on no account engage himself in gaming.

The first bottle passed in ordinary conversation; but, when they had tapped the second, Booth, on
some

some hints which Trent gave him, very fairly laid open to him his whole circumstances, and declared he almost despaired of mending them. 'My chief relief,' said he, 'was in the interest of Colonel James; but I have given up those hopes.'

'And very wisely too,' said Trent. 'I say nothing of the colonel's good will. Very likely he may be your sincere friend; but I do not believe he hath the interest he pretends to. He hath had too many favours in his own family, to ask any more yet a while. But I am mistaken, if you have not a much more powerful friend than the colonel; one, who is both able and willing to serve you. I dined at his table within these two days; and I never heard kinder nor warmer expressions from the mouth of man, than he made use of towards you. I make no doubt you know whom I mean.'

'Upon my honour, I do not,' answered Booth; 'nor did I guess that I had such a friend in the world as you mention.'

'I am glad then,' cries Trent, 'that I have the pleasure of informing you of it.' He then named the noble peer, who hath been already so often mentioned in this history.

Booth turned pale, and started at his name. 'I forgive you, my dear Trent,' cries Booth, 'for mentioning his name to me, as you are a stranger to what hath passed between us.'

'Nay, I know nothing that hath passed between you,' answered Trent. 'I am sure, if there is any quarrel between you of two days standing, all is forgiven on his part.'

'D—n his forgiveness,' said Booth. 'Perhaps I ought to blush at what I have forgiven.'

'You surprise me,' cries Trent. 'Pray what can be the matter?'

'Indeed, my dear Trent,' cries Booth very gravely, 'he would have injured me in the tenderest part. I know not how to tell it you; but he would have dishonoured me with my wife.'

'Sure, you are not in earnest,' answered Trent;

‘ but, if you are, you will pardon me for thinking that impossible.’

‘ Indeed,’ cries Booth, ‘ I have so good an opinion of my wife, as to believe it impossible for him to succeed ; but that he should intend me the favour, you will not, I believe, think an impossibility.’

‘ Faith ! not in the least,’ said Trent. ‘ Mrs. Booth is a very fine woman ; and if I had the honour to be her husband, I should not be angry with any man for liking her.’

‘ But you would be angry,’ said Booth, ‘ with a man, who should make use of stratagems and contrivances to seduce her virtue ; especially if he did this under the colour of entertaining the highest friendship for yourself.’

‘ Not at all,’ cries Trent. ‘ It is human nature.’

‘ Perhaps it is,’ cries Booth ; ‘ but it is human nature depraved, stript of all its worth, and loveliness, and dignity, and degraded down to a level with the vilest brutes.’

‘ Look ye, Booth,’ cries Trent, ‘ I would not be misunderstood. I think, when I am talking to you, I talk to a man of sense, and to an inhabitant of this country ; not to one who dwells in a land of saints. If you have really such an opinion as you express of this noble Lord, you have the finest opportunity of making a complete fool and bubble of him that any man can desire, and of making your own fortune at the same time. I do not say that your suspicions are groundless ; for, of all men upon earth, I know my Lord is the greatest bubble to women, though I believe he hath had very few. And this I am confident of, that he hath not the least jealousy of these suspicions. Now therefore, if you will act the part of a wise man, I will undertake that you shall make your fortune, without the least injury to the chastity of Mrs. Booth.’

‘ I do not understand you, sir,’ said Booth.

‘ Nay,’ cries Trent, ‘ if you will not understand me, I have done. I meant only your service ; and I thought I had known you better.’

Booth

Booth begged him to explain himself. 'If you can,' said he, 'shew me any way to improve such circumstances as I have opened to you, you may depend on it I shall readily embrace it, and own my obligations to you.'

'That is spoken like a man,' cries Trent. 'Why, what is it more than this? Carry your suspicions in your own bosom. Let Mrs. Booth, in whose virtue I am sure you may be justly confident, go to the public places; there let her treat my lord with common civility only; I am sure he will bite. And thus, without suffering him to gain his purpose, you will gain yours. I know several who have succeeded with him in this manner.'

'I am very sorry, sir,' cries Booth, 'that you are acquainted with any such rascals. I do assure you, rather than I would act such a part, I would submit to the hardest sentence that fortune could pronounce against me.'

'Do as you please, sir,' said Trent; 'I have only ventured to advise you as a friend. But do you not think your nicety is a little over-scrupulous?'

'You will excuse me, sir,' said Booth; 'but I think no man can be too scrupulous in points which concern his honour.'

'I know many men of very nice honour,' answered Trent, 'who have gone much farther; and no man, I am sure, had ever a better excuse for it than yourself.—You will forgive me, Booth, since what I speak proceeds from my love to you; nay, indeed, by mentioning your affairs to me, which I am heartily sorry for, you have given me a right to speak. You know best what friends you have to depend upon; but, if you have no other pretensions than your merit, I can assure you, you would fail, if it was possible you could have ten times more merit than you have. And, if you love your wife, as I am convinced you do, what must be your condition, in seeing her want the necessaries of life?'

'I know my condition is very hard,' cries Booth; 'but I have one comfort in it, which I will never part with, and that is innocence. As to the mere ne-

‘ necessities of life, however, it is pretty difficult to deprive us of them ; this I am sure of, no one can want them long.’

‘ Upon my word, sir,’ cries Trent, ‘ I did not know you had been so great a philosopher. But, believe me, these matters look much less terrible at a distance, than when they are actually present. You will then find, I am afraid, that honour hath no more skill in cookery, than Shakespeare tells us it hath in surgery.—D—n me, if I don’t wish his Lordship loved my wife as well as he doth yours, I promise you I would trust her virtue ; and, if he should get the better of it, I should have people of fashion enough to keep me in countenance.’

Their second bottle being now almost out, Booth, without making any answer, called for a bill. Trent prest very much the drinking of another bottle ; but Booth absolutely refused, and presently afterwards they parted, not extremely well satisfied with each other. They appeared indeed one to the other in disadvantageous lights of a very different kind. Trent concluded Booth to be a very silly fellow ; and Booth began to suspect, that Trent was very little better than a scoundrel.

C H A P. VIII.

Contains a letter, and other matters.

WE will now return to Amelia ; to whom, immediately upon her husband’s departure to walk with Mr. Trent, a porter brought the following letter ; which she immediately opened and read.

‘ MADAM,

‘ THE quick dispatch which I have given to your first commands, will, I hope, assure you of the diligence with which I shall always obey every command that you are pleased to honour me with. I have indeed, in this trifling affair, acted as if my life itself had been at stake ; nay, I know not but it may be so : for this insignificant matter you

‘ was

‘ was pleased to tell me, would oblige the charming
‘ person in whose power is not only my happiness,
‘ but, as I am well persuaded, my life too. Let me
‘ reap therefore some little advantage in your eyes, as
‘ you have in mine, from this trifling occasion: for if
‘ any thing could add to the charms of which you are
‘ mistress, it would be perhaps that amiable zeal with
‘ which you maintain the cause of your friend. I
‘ hope, indeed, she will be my friend and advocate
‘ with the most lovely of her sex, as I think she hath
‘ reason, and as you was pleased to insinuate she had
‘ been. Let me beseech you, madam, let not that
‘ dear heart, whose tenderness is so inclined to com-
‘ passionate the miseries of others, be hardened only
‘ against the sufferings which itself occasions. Let not
‘ that man alone have reason to think you cruel, who,
‘ of all others, would do the most to procure your
‘ kindness. How often have I lived over in my re-
‘ flexions, in my dreams, those two short minutes we
‘ were together? But alas! how faint are these mi-
‘ micries of the imagination! What would I not
‘ give to purchase the reality of such another blessing!
‘ This, madam, is in your power, to bestow on the
‘ man who hath no wish, no will, no fortune, no
‘ heart, no life, but what are at your disposal. Grant
‘ me only the favour to be at Lady ——’s assembly.
‘ —— You can have nothing to fear from indulging
‘ me with a moment’s sight, a moment’s conversa-
‘ tion; I will ask no more. I know your delicacy,
‘ and had rather die than offend it. Could I have seen
‘ you sometimes, I believe the fear of offending you
‘ would have kept my love for ever buried in my own
‘ bosom; but, to be totally excluded even from the
‘ sight of what my soul doats on, is what I cannot
‘ bear. It is that alone which hath extorted the fatal
‘ secret from me. Let that obtain your forgiveness for
‘ me. I need not sign this letter, otherwise than
‘ with that impression of my heart which I hope it
‘ bears; and, to conclude it in any form, no lan-
‘ guage hath words of devotion strong enough to tell
‘ you with what truth, what anguish, what zeal, what
‘ adoration, I love you.’

Amelia had just strength to hold out to the end, when her trembling grew so violent, that she dropt the letter, and had probably dropt herself, had not Mrs. Atkinson come timely in to support her.

‘ Good Heavens !’ cries Mrs Atkinson, ‘ what is the matter with you, madam ?’

‘ I know not what is the matter,’ cries Amelia ; ‘ but I have received a letter at last from that infamous colonel.’

‘ You will take my opinion again then, I hope, madam,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson. ‘ But don’t be so affected ; the letter cannot eat you, or run away with you.—Here it lies, I see ; will you give me leave to read it ?’

‘ Read it with all my heart,’ cries Amelia, ‘ and give me your advice how to act ; for I am almost distracted.’

‘ Hey day !’ says Mrs. Atkinson, ‘ here is a piece of parchment too——What is that ?’ In truth, this parchment had dropt from the letter when Amelia first opened it : but her attention was so fixed by the contents of the letter itself, that she had never read the other. Mrs. Atkinson had now opened the parchment first ; and, after a moment’s perusal, the fire flashed from her eyes, and the blood flushed into her cheeks, and she cried out in a rapture, ‘ It is a commission for my husband ; upon my soul, it is a commission for my husband ;’ and at the same time began to jump about the room, in a kind of frantic fit of joy.

‘ What can be the meaning of all this ?’ cries Amelia, under the highest degree of astonishment.

‘ Do not I tell you, my dear madam,’ cried she, ‘ that it is a commission for my husband ; and can you wonder at my being overjoyed at what I know will make him so happy ?—And now it is all out. The letter is not from the colonel, but from that noble Lord of whom I have told you so much. But indeed, madam, I have some pardons to ask of you.—However, I know your goodness, and I will tell you all.’

‘ You

‘ You are to know then, madam, that I had not
‘ been in the opera-house six minutes before a masque
‘ came up, and taking me by the hand, led me aside.
‘ I gave the masque my hand; and seeing a lady at
‘ that time lay hold on Capt. Booth, I took that op-
‘ portunity of slipping away from him: for though by
‘ the help of the squeaking voice, and by attempting
‘ to mimic yours, I had pretty well disguised my
‘ own, I was still afraid, if I had much conversation
‘ with your husband, he would discover me. I walk-
‘ ed therefore away with this masque to the upper end
‘ of the farthest room, where we sat down in a corner
‘ together. He presently discovered to me, that he
‘ took me for you; and I soon after found out who he
‘ was: indeed, so far from attempting to disguise him-
‘ self, he spoke in his own voice, and in his own per-
‘ son. He now began to make very violent love to
‘ me; but it was rather in the stile of a great man of
‘ the present age, than of an Arcadian swain. In
‘ short, he laid his whole fortune at my feet, and bade
‘ me make whatever terms I pleased, either for my-
‘ self or for others. By others, I suppose, he meant
‘ your husband. This, however, put a thought into
‘ my head, of turning the present occasion to ad-
‘ vantage. I told him, there were two kinds of per-
‘ sons, the fallaciousness of whose promises had be-
‘ come proverbial in the world. These were lovers,
‘ and great men. What reliance then could I have
‘ on the promise of one, who united in himself both
‘ those characters? That I had seen a melancholy in-
‘ stance, in a very worthy woman of my acquaintance
‘ (meaning myself, madam) of his want of genero-
‘ sity. I said, I knew the obligations that he had to
‘ this woman, and the injuries he had done her: all
‘ which I was convinced she forgave: for that she had
‘ said the handsomest things in the world of him to me.
‘ He answered, that he thought he had not been defi-
‘ cient in generosity to this lady (for I explain’d to
‘ him whom I meant); but that indeed, if she had
‘ spoke well of him to me (meaning yourself, ma-
‘ dam) he would not fail to reward her for such an ob-
‘ ligation. I then told him she had married a very
‘ deserving

‘deserving man, who had served long in the army abroad as a private man, and who was a serjeant in the guards; that I knew it was so very easy for him to get him a commission, that I should not think he had any honour or goodness in the world, if he neglected it. I declared this step must be a preliminary to any good opinion he must ever hope for of mine. I then professed the greatest friendship to that lady (in which I am convinced you will think me serious) and assured him he would give me one of the highest pleasures, in letting me be the instrument of doing her such a service. He promised me in a moment to do what you see, madam, he hath since done. And to you I shall always think myself indebted for it.’

‘I know not how you are indebted to me,’ cries Amelia. ‘Indeed, I am very glad of any good fortune that can attend poor Atkinson: but I wish it had been obtained some other way. Good Heavens! what must be the consequence of this? What must this Lord think of me, for listening to his mention of love; nay, for making any terms with him? for what must he suppose those terms mean? Indeed, Mrs. Atkinson, you carried it a great deal too far. No wonder he had the assurance to write to me in the manner he hath done. It is too plain what he conceives of me, and who knows what he may say to others. You may have blown up my reputation by your behaviour.’

‘How is that possible?’ answered Mrs. Atkinson, ‘Is it not in my power to clear up all matters? If you will but give me leave to make an appointment in your name, I will meet him myself, and declare the whole secret to him.’

‘I will consent to no such appointment,’ cries Amelia. ‘I am heartily sorry I ever consented to practise any deceit. I plainly see the truth of what Dr. Harrison hath often told me, that if one steps ever so little out of the way of virtue and innocence, we know not how we may slide; for all the ways of vice are a slippery descent.’

‘That sentiment,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson, ‘is much older than Dr. Harrison. *Omne vitium in proclivi est.*’

‘However

‘However new or old it is, I find it is true,’ cries Amelia.——‘But pray, tell me all, though I tremble to hear it.’

‘Indeed, my dear friend,’ said Mrs. Atkinson, ‘you are terrified at nothing—Indeed, indeed, you are too great a prude.’

‘I do not know what you mean by prudery,’ answered Amelia. ‘I shall never be ashamed of the strictest regard to decency, to reputation, and to that honour in which the dearest of all human creatures hath his share. But pray give me the letter, there is an expression in it which alarmed me when I read it.—Pray, what doth he mean by his two short minutes, and by purchasing the reality of such another blessing?’

‘Indeed, I know not what he means by two minutes,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson, ‘unless he calls two hours so; for we were not together much less.—And as for any blessing he had—I am a stranger to it. Sure, I hope you have a better opinion of me, than to think I granted him the last favour.’

‘I don’t know what favours you granted him, madam, answered Amelia peevishly; but I am sorry you granted him any in my name.’

‘Upon my word,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson, ‘you use me unkindly—and it is an usage I did not expect at your hands; nor do I know that I have deserved it. I am sure I went to the masquerade with no other view than to oblige you; nor did I say or do any thing there which any woman, who is not the most confounded prude upon earth, would have started at on a much less occasion than what induced me. Well, I declare upon my soul then, that, if I was a man, rather than be married to a woman who makes such a fuss with her virtue, I would wish my wife was without such a troublesome companion.’

‘Very possibly, madam, these may be your sentiments,’ cries Amelia; ‘and I hope they are the sentiments of your husband.’

‘I desire, madam,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson, ‘you would not reflect on my husband. He is as worthy a
‘man,

‘man, and as brave a man as yours; yes, madam, and he is now as much a captain.’

She spoke those words with so loud a voice, that Atkinson, who was accidentally going up stairs, heard them; and, being surprised at the angry tone of his wife’s voice, he entered the room, and with a look of much astonishment, begged to know what was the matter.

‘The matter, my dear,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson, ‘is that I have got a commission for you, and your good old friend here is angry with me for getting it.’

‘I have not spirits enow,’ cries Amelia, ‘to answer you as you deserve; and, if I had, you are below my anger.’

‘I do not know, Mrs. Booth,’ answered the other, ‘whence this great superiority over me is derived; but, if your virtue gives it you, I would have you to know, madam, that I despise a prude, as much as you can do a —.’

‘Though you have several times,’ cries Amelia, ‘insulted me with that word, I scorn to give you any ill language in return. If you deserve any bad appellation, you know it, without my telling it you.’

Poor Atkinson, who was more frightened than he had ever been in his life, did all he could to procure peace. He fell upon his knees to his wife, and begged her to compose herself; for, indeed, she seemed to be in a most furious rage.

While he was in this posture, Booth, who had knocked so gently at the door, for fear of disturbing his wife, that he had not been heard in the tempest, came into the room. The moment Amelia saw him, the tears, which had been gathering for some time, burst in a torrent from her eyes, which, however, she endeavoured to conceal with her handkerchief. The entry of Booth turned all in an instant into a silent picture; in which, the first figure which struck the eyes of the captain, was the serjeant on his knees to his wife.

Booth immediately cried—‘What’s the meaning of this?—but received no answer. He then cast his eyes towards Amelia; and plainly discerning her condition,

dition, he ran to her, and in a very tender phrase begged to know what was the matter. To which she answered,—‘Nothing, my dear, nothing, my dear, nothing of any consequence.’ He replied—that he would know; and then turned to Atkinson, and asked the same question.’

Atkinson answered, ‘Upon my honour, sir, I know nothing of it.—Something hath passed between madam and my wife; but what it is, I know no more than your honour.’

‘Your wife,’ said Mrs. Atkinson, ‘hath used me cruelly ill, Mr. Booth. If you must be satisfied, that is the whole matter.’

Booth rapt out a great oath, and cried, ‘It is impossible; my wife is not capable of using any one ill.’

Amelia then cast herself upon her knees to her husband, and cried, ‘For Heaven’s sake, do not throw yourself into a passion—Some few words have past—Perhaps I may be in the wrong.’

‘Damnation seize me, if I think so, cries Booth. And I wish whoever hath drawn these tears from your eyes, may pay it with as many drops of their heart’s blood’

‘You see, madam,’ cries Mrs. Atkinson, ‘you have your bully to take your part; so, I suppose, you will use your triumph.’

Amelia made no answer; but still kept hold of Booth, who, in a violent rage, cried out,—‘My Amelia triumph over such a wretch as thee!—What can lead thy insolence to such presumption? Serjeant, I desire you’ll take that monster out of the room, or I cannot answer for myself.’

The serjeant was beginning to beg his wife to retire, (for he perceived very plainly, that she had, as the phrase is, taken a sip too much that evening) when, with a rage little short of madness, she cried out,—‘And do you tamely see me insulted in such a manner now that you are a gentleman and upon a footing with him?’

‘It is lucky for us all, perhaps,’ answered Booth, ‘that he is not my equal.’

‘You

‘ You lie, firrah,’ said Mrs. Atkinson, ‘ he is every way your equal ; he is as good a gentleman as yourself, and as much an officer.——No, I retract what I say—he hath not the spirit of a gentleman, nor of a man neither—or he would not bear to see his wife insulted.’

‘ Let me beg of you, my dear,’ cries the serjeant, ‘ to go with me and compose yourself.’

‘ Go with thee, thou wretch,’——cries she, looking with the utmost disdain upon him,——‘ no, nor ever speak to thee more.’——At which words she burst out of the room : and the serjeant, without saying a word, followed her.

A very tender and pathetic scene now passed between Booth and his wife, in which, when she was a little composed, she related to him the whole story. For besides that it was not possible for her otherwise to account for the quarrel which he had seen, Booth was now possessed of the letter that lay on the floor.

Amelia having emptied her mind to her husband, and obtained his faithful promise that he would not resent the affair to my lord, was pretty well composed, and began to relent a little towards Mrs. Atkinson ; but Booth was so highly incensed with her, that he declared he would leave her house the next morning ; which they both accordingly did, and immediately accommodated themselves with convenient apartments within a few doors of their friend the doctor.

C H A P. IX.

Containing some things worthy observation.

NOtwithstanding the exchange of his lodgings, Booth did not forget to send an excuse to Mr. Trent, of whose conversation he had taken a full surfeit the preceding evening.

That day in his walks, Booth met with an old brother-officer, who had served with him at Gibraltar, and was on half-pay as well as himself. He had not, indeed, had the fortune of being broke with his regiment, as was Booth ; but had gone out, as they call it,
on

on half-pay as a lieutenant, a rank to which he had risen in five and thirty years.

This honest gentleman, after some discourse with Booth, desired him to lend him half a crown; which he assured him he would faithfully pay the next day, when he was to receive some money for his sister. This sister was the widow of an officer that had been killed in the sea-service; and she and her brother lived together, on their joint-stock, out of which, they maintained likewise an old mother, and two of the sister's children, the eldest of which was about nine years old.

'You must know,' said the old lieutenant, 'I have been disappointed this morning by an old scoundrel, who wanted fifteen per cent. for advancing my sister's pension; but I have now got an honest fellow, who hath promised it me to-morrow, at ten per cent.'

'And enough too of all conscience,' cries Booth.

'Why, indeed, I think so too,' answered the other, 'considering it is sure to be paid one time or other. To say the truth, it is a little hard the government doth not pay those pensions better; for my sister's hath been due almost these two years; that is my way of thinking.'

Booth answered he was ashamed to refuse him such a sum; but, 'Upon my soul,' said he, 'I have not a single half-penny in my pocket; for I am in a worse condition, if possible, than yourself; for I have lost all my money, and what is worse, I owe Mr. Trent, whom you remember at Gibraltar, fifty pounds.'

'Remember him! yes, d—n him, I remember him very well,' cries the old gentleman, 'though he will not remember me. He is grown so great now, that he will not speak to his old acquaintance; and yet I should be ashamed of myself to be great in such a manner.'

'What manner do you mean?' cries Booth a little eagerly.

'Why, pimping,' answered the other. 'He is pimp in ordinary to my lord —, who keeps his family; or how the devil he lives else I don't know; for his place is not worth three hundred pounds a year.'

‘ year, and he and his wife spend a thousand at least. But she keeps an assembly, which, I believe, if you was to call a bawdy-house, you would not mis-name it. But d—n me, if I had not rather be an honest man, and walk on foot, with holes in my shoes, as I do now, or go without a dinner, as I and all my family will to-day, than ride in a chariot, and feast by such means. I am honest Bob Bound, and always will be; that’s my way of thinking; and there’s no man shall call me otherwise; for if he doth, I will knock him down for a lying rascal; that is my way of thinking.’

‘ And a very good way of thinking too,’ cries Booth. ‘ However, you shall not want a dinner to-day; for if you will go home with me, I will lend you a crown with all my heart.’

‘ Lookee,’ said the old man, if it be any wise inconvenient to you, I will not have it; for I will never rob another man of his dinner, to eat myself —that is my way of thinking.’

‘ Pooh,’ said Booth, ‘ never mention such a trifle twice between you and me. Besides, you say you can pay it me to-morrow; and I promise you that will be the same thing.’

They then walked together to Booth’s lodgings, where Booth, from Amelia’s pocket, gave his friend double the little sum he had asked. Upon which, the old gentleman shook him heartily by the hand, and repeating his intention of paying him the next day, made the best of his way to a butcher’s, whence he carried off a leg of mutton to a family that had lately kept Lent without any religious merit.

When he was gone, Amelia asked her husband who that old gentleman was. Booth answered, he was one of the scandals of his country. That the duke of Marlborough had about thirty years before made him an ensign from a private man, for very particular merit; and that he had not long since gone out of the army with a broken heart, upon having several boys put over his head. He then gave her an account of his family, which he had heard from the old gentleman

man in their way to his house, and with which we have already in a concise manner acquainted the reader.

'Good Heavens!' cries Amelia, 'what are our great men made of! are they in reality a distinct species from the rest of mankind? are they born without hearts?'

'One would indeed sometimes,' cries Booth, 'be inclined to think so. In truth, they have no perfect idea of those common distresses of mankind which are far removed from their own sphere. Compassion, if thoroughly examined, will, I believe, appear to be the fellow-feeling only of men of the same rank and degree of life for one another, on account of the evils to which they themselves are liable. Our sensations are, I am afraid, very cold towards those who are at a great distance from us, and whose calamities can consequently never reach us.'

'I remember,' cries Amelia, 'a sentiment of Dr. Harrison's, which he told me was in some Latin book; *I am a man myself, and my heart is interested in whatever can befall the rest of mankind.* That is the sentiment of a good man, and whoever thinks otherwise is a bad one.'

'I have often told you, my dear Emily,' cries Booth, 'that all men, as well the best as the worst, act alike from the principle of self-love. Where benevolence therefore is the uppermost passion, self-love directs you to gratify it by doing good, and by relieving the distresses of others; for they are then in reality your own. But where ambition, avarice, pride, or any other passion, governs the man, and keeps his benevolence down, the miseries of all other men affect him no more than they would a stock or a stone. And thus the man and his statue have often the same degree of feeling or compassion.'

'I have often wished, my dear,' cries Amelia, 'to hear you converse with Dr. Harrison on this subject; for I am sure he would convince you, though I can't, that there are really such things as religion and virtue.'

This was not the first hint of this kind which Amelia had given; for she sometimes apprehended
from

from his discourse that he was little better than an atheist. A consideration which did not diminish her affection for him; but gave her great uneasiness. On all such occasions, Booth immediately turned the discourse to some other subject; for though he had in other points a great opinion of his wife's capacity; yet as a divine or a philosopher, he did not hold her in a very respectable light, nor did he lay any great stress on her sentiments in such matters. He now therefore gave a speedy turn to the conversation, and began to talk of affairs below the dignity of this history.

A M E L I A.

BOOK XI.

CHAP. I.

Containing a very polite scene.

WE will now look back to some personages, who, though not the principal characters in this history, have yet made too considerable a figure in it to be abruptly dropt. And these are colonel James and his lady.

This fond couple never met till dinner the day after the masquerade, when they happened to be alone together in an antichamber before the arrival of the rest of the company.

The conversation began with the colonel's saying, 'I hope, madam, you got no cold last night at the masquerade.' To which the lady answered by much the same kind of question.

They then sat together near five minutes without opening their mouths to each other. At last Mrs. James said, 'Pray, sir, who was that masque with you in the dress of a shepherdess? How could you expose yourself by walking with such a trollop in public; for certainly no woman of any figure would appear there in such a dress. You know, Mr. James, I never interfere with your affairs; but I would, methinks, for my own sake, if I was you, preserve a little decency in the face of the world.'

'Upon my word,' said James, 'I do not know whom you mean. A woman in such a dress might speak to me for ought I know—A thousand people
' speak

‘ speak to me at a masquerade. But I promise you, I spoke to no woman acquaintance there that I know of—Indeed, I now recollect there was a woman in a dress of a shepherdess; and there was another awkward thing in a blue domino that plagued me a little; but I soon got rid of them.

‘ And I suppose you do not know the lady in the blue domino neither?’——

‘ Not I, I assure you,’ said James. ‘ But pray, why do you ask me these questions? It looks so like jealousy.’

‘ Jealousy!’ cries she, ‘ I jealous! no, Mr. James, I shall never be jealous, I promise you, especially of the lady in the blue domino; for to my knowledge she despises you of all human race.’

‘ I am heartily glad of it,’ said James; ‘ for I never saw such a tall awkward monster in my life.’

‘ That is a very cruel way of telling me you knew me.’——

‘ You, madam,’ said James——‘ you was in a black domino.’

‘ It is not so unusual a thing, I believe, you yourself know, to change dresses.—I own I did it to discover some of your tricks. I did not think you could have distinguished the tall awkward monster so well.’

‘ Upon my soul,’ said James, ‘ if it was you, I did not even suspect it; so you ought not to be offended at what I have said ignorantly.’

‘ Indeed, sir,’ cries she, ‘ you cannot offend me by any thing you can say to my face—no, by my soul, I despise you too much. But I wish, Mr. James, you would not make me the subject of your conversation amongst your wenches. I desire I may not be afraid of meeting them for fear of their insults; that I may not be told by a dirty trollop, you make me the subject of your wit amongst them, of which, it seems, I am the favourite topic. Though you have married a tall awkward monster, Mr. James, I think she hath a right to be treated, as your wife, with respect at least—Indeed, I shall never require any more: indeed,

‘ Mr.

Mr. James, I never shall.—I think, a wife hath a title to that.’

‘Who told you this, madam?’ said James.

‘Your slut,’ said she, ‘your wench, your shepherdess.’

‘By all that’s sacred,’ cries James, ‘I do not know who the shepherdess was.’

‘By all that’s sacred, then’ says she—‘she told me so—and I am convinced she told me truth.—But I do not wonder at your denying it; for that is equally consistent with honour as to behave in such a manner to a wife who is a gentlewoman.—I hope you will allow me that, sir.—Because I had not quite so great a fortune, I hope you do not think me beneath you, or that you did me any honour in marrying me. I am come of as good a family as yourself, Mr. James; and if my brother knew how you treated me, he would not bear it.’

‘Do you threaten me with your brother, madam?’ said James.

‘I will not be ill treated, sir,’ answered she.

‘Nor I neither, madam,’ cries he; ‘and therefore I desire you will prepare to go into the country to-morrow morning.’

‘Indeed, sir,’ said she, ‘I shall not.’

‘By Heavens, madam, but you shall,’ answered he; ‘I will have my coach at the door to-morrow morning by seven; and you shall either go into it or be carried.’

‘I hope, sir, you are not in earnest,’ said she.

Indeed, madam,’ answered he, ‘but I am in earnest, and resolved; and into the country you go to-morrow.’

‘But why into the country,’ said she, ‘Mr. James? Why will you be so barbarous to deny me the pleasures of the town?’

‘Because you interfere with my pleasures,’ cried James; ‘which I have told you long ago I would not submit to. It is enough for fond couples to have these scenes together. I thought we had been upon a better footing, and had cared too little for each other to become mutual plagues. I thought you had been

‘ been satisfied with the full liberty of doing what you please.’

‘ So I am ; I defy you to say I have ever given you any uneasiness.’

‘ How,’ cries he, ‘ have you not just now upbraided me with what you heard at the masquerade ?’

‘ I own,’ said she, ‘ to be insulted by such a creature to my face stung me to the soul. I must have had no spirit to bear the insults of such an animal. Nay, she spoke of you with equal contempt. Whoever she is, I promise you, Mr. Booth is her favourite. But, indeed, she is unworthy any one’s regard : for she behaved like an arrant dragoon.’

‘ Hang her,’ cries the colonel, ‘ I know nothing of her.’

‘ Well, but, Mr. James—I am sure you will not send me into the country. Indeed, I will not go into the country.’

‘ If you was a reasonable woman,’ cries James, ‘ perhaps I should not desire it.—And on one consideration’—

‘ Come, name your consideration,’ said she.

‘ Let me first experience your discernment,’ said he
‘ —Come, Molly, let me try your judgment.
‘ Can you guess at any woman of your acquaintance that I like ?’

‘ Sure,’ said she, ‘ it cannot be Mrs. Booth !’

‘ And why not Mrs. Booth,’ answered he ? ‘ Is she not the finest woman in the world ?’

‘ Very far from it,’ replied she, ‘ in my opinion.’

‘ Pray what faults,’ said he, ‘ can you find in her ?’

‘ In the first place,’ cries Mrs. James, ‘ her eyes are too large ; and she hath a look with them that I don’t know how to describe ; but I know I don’t like it. Then her eye-brows are too large ; therefore, indeed, she doth all in her power to remedy this with her pincers : for if it was not for those, her eyebrows would be preposterous.—Then her nose, as well proportioned as it is, has a visible scar on one side.—Her neck likewise is too protuberant for the genteel size, especially as she laces herself : for no woman in my opinion can be genteel who is not
‘ entirely

entirely flat before. And lastly, she is both too short and too tall. — Well, you may laugh, Mr. James, I know what I mean, though I cannot well express it. — I mean that she is too tall for a pretty woman, and too short for a fine woman. — There is such a thing as a kind of insipid medium — a kind of something that is neither one thing or another. I know not how to express it more clearly; but when I say such a one is a pretty woman, a pretty thing, a pretty creature, you know very well I mean a little woman; and when I say such a one is a very fine woman, a very fine person of a woman, to be sure I must mean a tall woman. Now a woman that is between both, is certainly neither the one nor the other.

Well, I own,' said he, 'you have explained yourself with great dexterity; but with all these imperfections, I cannot help liking her.'

'That you need not tell me, Mr. James,' answered the lady; 'for that I knew before you desired me to invite her to your house. And nevertheless, did not I, like an obedient wife, comply with your desires? did I make any objection to the party you proposed for the masquerade, though I knew very well your motive? what can the best of wives do more? to procure you success is not in my power; and if I may give you my opinion, I believe you never will succeed with her.'

'Is her virtue so very impregnable,' said he, with a sneer.

'Her virtue,' answered Mrs. James, 'hath the best guard in the world, which is a most violent love for her husband.'

'All pretence and affectation,' cries the colonel. 'It is impossible she should have so little taste, or, indeed, so little delicacy, as to like such a fellow.'

'Nay, I do not much like him myself,' said she. — He is not indeed at all such a sort of man as I should like; but I thought he had been generally allowed to be handsome.'

'He handsome!' cries James. 'What with a nose like the proboscis of an elephant, with the shoulders

‘ of a porter, and the legs of a chairman ? The fellow has not in the least the look of a gentleman ; and one would rather think he had followed the plough than the camp all his life.’

‘ Nay, now I protest,’ said she, ‘ I think you do him injustice. He is genteel enough, in my opinion. It is true, indeed, he is not quite of the most delicate make ; but whatever he is, I am convinced she thinks him the finest man in the world.’

‘ I cannot believe it,’ answered he peevishly——
‘ But will you invite her to dinner here to-morrow ?’

‘ With all my heart, and as often as you please, answered she—— ‘ But I have some favours to ask of you.——First, I must hear no more of going out of town till I please.’

‘ Very well,’ cried he.

‘ In the next place,’ said she, ‘ I must have two hundred guineas within these two or three days.’

‘ Well—I agree to that too,’ answered he. ‘ And when I do go out of town, too, I go to Tunbridge—I insist upon that ; and from Tunbridge I go to Bath——positively to Bath. And I promise you faithfully I will do all in my power to carry Mrs. Booth with me.’

‘ On that condition,’ answered he, ‘ I promise you you shall go wherever you please.——And to shew you, I will even prevent your wishes by my generosity, as soon as I receive the five thousand pounds, which I am going to take up on one of my estates, you shall have two hundred more.’

She thanked him with a low curtesie ; and he was in such good humour, that he offered to kiss her. To this kiss she coldly turned her cheek—and then flirting her fan, said—— ‘ Mr. James, there is one thing I forgot to mention to you—I think you intended to get a commission in some regiment abroad for this young man.——Now if you would take my advice, I know this will not oblige his wife ; and besides, I am positive she resolves to go with him.——But if you can provide for him in some regiment at home, I know she will dearly love you for it ; and when he is ordered to quarters, she will be left behind—and

‘ Yorkshire

‘Yorkshire or Scotland, I think, is as good a distance as either of the Indies.’

‘Well, I will do what I can,’ answered James; ‘but I cannot ask any thing yet; for I got two places of a hundred a year each for two of my footmen, within this fortnight.’

At this instant a violent knock at the door signified the arrival of their company; upon which, both husband and wife put on their best looks to receive their guests; and, from their behaviour to each other during the rest of the day, a stranger might have concluded he had been in company with the fondest couple in the universe.

C H A P. II.

Matters political.

BEFORE we return to Booth, we will relate a scene in which Doctor Harrison was concerned.

This good man, whilst in the country, happened to be in the neighbourhood of a nobleman of his acquaintance, and whom he knew to have very considerable interest with the ministers at that time.

The doctor, who was very well known to this nobleman, took this opportunity of paying him a visit in order to recommend poor Booth to his favour. Nor did he much doubt of his success, the favour he was to ask being a very small one, and to which he thought the service of Booth gave him so just a title.

The doctor's name soon gained him an admission to the presence of this great man, who, indeed, received him with much courtesy and politeness; not so much perhaps from any particular regard to the sacred function, nor from any respect to the doctor's personal merit, as from some considerations which the reader will perhaps guess anon. After many ceremonials, and some previous discourse on different subjects, the doctor opened his business, and told the great man, that he was come to him to solicit a favour for a young gentleman who had been an officer in the army, and was now on half-pay. ‘All the favour I ask, my

‘ lord,’ said he, ‘ is, that this gentleman may be again admitted *ad eundem*. I am convinced, your lordship will do me the justice to think I would not ask for a worthless person; but, indeed, the young man I mean has very extraordinary merit. He was at the siege of Gibraltar, in which he behaved with distinguished bravery; and was dangerously wounded at two several times in the service of his country. I will add, that he is at present in great necessity, and hath a wife and several children, for whom he hath no other means of providing; and if it will recommend him further to your lordship’s favour, his wife, I believe, is one of the best and worthiest of all her sex.’

‘ As to that, my dear doctor,’ cries the nobleman, ‘ I shall make no doubt. Indeed, any service I shall do the gentleman will be upon your account. As to necessity, it is the plea of so many, that it is impossible to serve them all.—— And with regard to the personal merit of these inferior officers, I believe, I need not tell you that it is very little regarded. But if you recommend him, let the person be what he will, I am convinced it will be done: for I know it is in your power at present to ask for a greater matter than this.’

‘ I depend entirely upon your lordship,’ answered the doctor.

‘ Indeed, my worthy friend,’ replied the lord, ‘ I will not take a merit to myself, which will so little belong to me. You are to depend on yourself. It falls out very luckily too at this time when you have it in your power so greatly to oblige us.’

‘ What, my lord, is in my power?’ cries the doctor.

‘ You certainly know,’ answered his lordship, ‘ how hard Colonel Trompington is run at your town, in the election of a mayor; they tell me, it will be a very near thing, unless you join us. But we know it is in your power to do the business, and turn the scale. I heard your name mentioned the other day on that account; and I know you may have any thing in reason, if you will give us your interest.’

‘ Sure,

‘ Sure, my lord,’ cries the doctor, ‘ you are not in earnest in asking my interest for the colonel.’

‘ Indeed I am,’ answered the peer. ‘ Why should you doubt it ?’

‘ For many reasons,’ answered the doctor. ‘ First, I am an old friend and acquaintance of Mr. Fairfield, as your lordship, I believe, very well knows. The little interest, therefore, that I have, you may be assured, will go in his favour. Indeed, I do not concern myself deeply in these affairs: for I do not think it becomes my cloth so to do. But as far as I think it decent to interest myself, it will certainly be on the side of Mr. Fairfield. Indeed, I should do so, if I was acquainted with both the gentlemen, only by reputation: the one being a neighbouring gentleman, of a very large estate, a very sober and sensible man, of known probity and attachment to the true interest of his country. The other is a mere stranger, a boy, a soldier of fortune, and, as far as I can discern from the little conversation I have had with him, of a very shallow capacity, and no education.’

‘ No education ! my dear friend,’ cries the nobleman. ‘ Why he hath been educated in half the courts of Europe.’

‘ Perhaps so, my lord,’ answered the doctor; ‘ but I shall always be so great a pedant as to call a man, of no learning, a man of no education.—— And from my own knowledge, I can aver, that I am persuaded there is scarce a foot soldier in the army who is more illiterate than the colonel.’

‘ Why as to Latin and Greek, you know,’ replied the lord, ‘ they are not much required in the army.’

‘ It may be so,’ said the doctor. ‘ Then let such persons keep to their own profession. It is a very low civil capacity indeed for which an illiterate man can be qualified. And, to speak a plain truth, if your lordship is a friend to the colonel, you would do well to advise him to decline an attempt, in which I am certain he hath no probability of success.’

‘ Well, sir,’ said the lord, ‘ if you are resolved against us, I must deal as freely with you, and tell you

‘plainly I cannot serve you in your affair. Nay, it will be the best thing I can do, to hold my tongue: for if I should mention his name with your recommendation, after what you have said, he would perhaps never get provided for as long as he lives.’

‘Is his own merit then, my Lord, no recommendation?’ cries the doctor.

‘My dear, dear sir,’ cries the other—‘what is the merit of a subaltern officer?’

‘Surely, my lord,’ cries the doctor, ‘it is the merit which should recommend him to the post of a subaltern officer. And it is a merit which will hereafter qualify him to serve his country in a higher capacity. And I do assure you of this young man, that he hath not only a good heart, but a good head too. And I have been told by those who are judges, that he is for his age an excellent officer.’

‘Very probably!’ cries my lord—‘And there are abundance with the same merit, and the same qualifications, who want a morsel of bread for themselves and their families.’

‘It is an infamous scandal on the nation,’ cries the doctor; ‘and I am heartily sorry it can be said even with a colour of truth.’

‘How can it be otherwise?’ says the peer. ‘Do you think it is possible to provide for all men of merit?’

‘Yes, surely do I,’ said the doctor. ‘And very easily too.’

‘How, pray?’—cries the lord—‘Upon my word I shall be glad to know.’

‘Only by not providing for those who have none. —The men of merit in any capacity are not, I am afraid, so extremely numerous, that we need starve any of them, unless we wickedly suffer a set of worthless fellows to eat their bread.’

‘This is all mere Utopia,’ cries his lordship. ‘The chimerical system of Plato’s commonwealth, with which we amused ourselves at the university; politics which are inconsistent with the state of human affairs.’

‘Sure, my lord,’ cries the doctor, ‘we have read of states where such doctrines have been put in practice.’

‘What

What is your lordship's opinion of Rome in the earlier ages of the commonwealth, of Sparta, and even of Athens itself in some periods of its history?

'Indeed, doctor,' cries the lord, 'all these notions are obsolete and long since exploded. To apply maxims of government drawn from the Greek and Roman histories, to this nation, is absurd and impossible. But if you will have Roman examples, fetch them from those times of the republic that were most like our own. Do you not know, doctor, that this is as corrupt a nation as ever existed under the sun? And would you think of governing such a people by the strict principles of honour and morality?'

'If it be so corrupt,' said the doctor, 'I think it is high time to amend it. Or else it is easy to foresee that Roman and British liberty will have the same fate; for corruption in the body politic as naturally tends to dissolution as in the natural body.'

'I thank you for your simile,' cries my lord: 'for in the natural body, I believe, you will allow there is the season of youth, the season of manhood, and the season of old age; and that, when the last of these arrives, it will be an impossible attempt by all the means of art to restore the body again to its youth, or to the vigour of its middle age. The same periods happen to every great kingdom. In its youth, it rises by arts and arms to power and prosperity. This it enjoys and flourishes for a while; and then it may be said to be in the vigour of its age, enriched at home with all the emoluments and blessings of peace, and formidable abroad with all the terrors of war. At length, this very prosperity introduces corruption; and then comes on its old age. Virtue and learning, art and industry, decay by degrees. The people sink into sloth and luxury, and prostitution. It is enervated at home, becomes contemptible abroad; and such indeed is its misery and wretchedness, that it resembles a man in the last decrepit stage of life, who looks with unconcern at his approaching dissolution.'

'This is a melancholy picture indeed,' cries the doctor; 'and if the latter part of it can be applied to

‘ our case, I see nothing but religion, which would
‘ have prevented this decrepit state of the constitu-
‘ tion, should prevent a man of spirit from hanging
‘ himself out of the way of so wretched a contem-
‘ plation.’

‘ Why so?’ said the peer. ‘ Why, hang myself,
‘ doctor? would it not be wiser, think you, to make
‘ the best of your time, and the most you can in such a
‘ nation?’

‘ And is religion then to be really laid out of the
‘ question?’ cries the doctor.

‘ If I am to speak my own opinion, sir,’ answered
the peer, ‘ you know I shall answer in the negative.—
‘ But you are too well acquainted with the world to
‘ be told, that the conduct of politicians is not formed
‘ upon the principles of religion.’

‘ I am very sorry for it,’ cries the doctor; ‘ but I
‘ will talk to them then of honour and honesty: this
‘ is a language which I hope they will at least pretend
‘ to understand. Now to deny a man the preferment
‘ which he merits, and to give it to another man who
‘ doth not merit it, is a manifest act of injustice; and
‘ is consequently inconsistent with both honour and ho-
‘ nesty. Nor is it only an act of injustice to the man
‘ himself, but to the public, for whose good princi-
‘ pally all public offices are, or ought to be, instituted.
‘ Now this good can never be completed, nor obtain-
‘ ed, but by employing all persons according to their
‘ capacities. Wherever true merit is liable to be su-
‘ perseded by favour and partiality, and men are in-
‘ trusted with offices, without any regard to capacity
‘ or integrity, the affairs of that state will always be in
‘ a deplorable situation. Such, as Livy tells us, was
‘ the state of Capua, a little before its final destruc-
‘ tion; and the consequence your lordship well knows.
‘ But, my lord, there is another mischief which at-
‘ tends this kind of injustice; and that is, it hath a
‘ manifest tendency to destroy all virtue and all abi-
‘ lity among the people, by taking away all that en-
‘ couragement and incentive, which should promote
‘ emulation, and raise men to aim at excelling in any
‘ art, science, or profession. Nor can any thing, my
‘ lord,

‘ lord, contribute more to render a nation contemptible
‘ among its neighbours; for what opinion can other
‘ countries have of the councils, or what terror can
‘ they conceive of the arms, of such a people? and it
‘ was chiefly owing to the avoiding of this error, that
‘ Oliver Cromwell carried the reputation of England
‘ higher than it ever was at any other time. I will
‘ add only one argument more, and that is founded on
‘ the most narrow and selfish system of politics; and
‘ this is, that such a conduct is sure to create universal
‘ discontent and grumbling at home: for nothing can
‘ bring men to rest satisfied, when they see others pre-
‘ ferred to them, but an opinion that they deserve
‘ that elevation; for, as one of the greatest men this
‘ country ever produced observes,

‘ One worthless man that gains what he pretends,
‘ Disgusts a thousand unpretending friends.’

‘ With what heart-burnings then must any nation see
‘ themselves obliged to contribute to the support of
‘ a set of men, of whose incapacity to serve them they
‘ are well apprised, and who do their country a double
‘ diskindness; by being themselves employed in posts
‘ to which they are unequal, and by keeping others
‘ out of those employments, for which they are qua-
‘ lified!’

‘ And do you really think, doctor, cries the no-
‘ bleman, ‘ that any minister could support himself in
‘ this country upon such principles as you recom-
‘ mend? Do you think he would be able to baffle an
‘ opposition, unless he should oblige his friends by
‘ conferring places often, contrary to his own inclina-
‘ tions, and his own opinion?’

‘ Yes, really do I,’ cries the doctor. ‘ Indeed, if
‘ a minister is resolved to make good his confession in
‘ the liturgy, by *leaving undone all those things which he*
‘ *ought to have done, and by doing all those things which*
‘ *he ought not to have done*; such a minister, I grant,
‘ will be obliged to baffle opposition, as you are plea-
‘ sed.

‘ sed to term it, by these arts; for, as Shakespeare
‘ somewhere says,

“ Things ill begun strengthen themselves by ill.”

‘ But if, on the contrary, he will please to consider
‘ the true interest of his country, and that only in
‘ great and national points; if he will engage his
‘ country in neither alliances or quarrels, but where it
‘ is really interested; if he will raise no money but
‘ what is wanted; nor employ any civil or military
‘ officers but what are useful; and place in these em-
‘ ployments men of the highest integrity, and of the
‘ greatest abilities; if he will employ some few of his
‘ hours to advance our trade, and some few more to
‘ regulate our domestic government: if he would do
‘ this, my lord, I will answer for it, he shall either
‘ have no opposition to baffle, or he shall baffle it by
‘ a fair appeal to his conduct. Such a minister may,
‘ in the language of the law, put himself on his coun-
‘ try when he pleases, and he shall come off with ho-
‘ nour and applause.’

‘ And do you really believe, doctor,’ cries the peer,
‘ there ever was such a minister, or ever will be?’

‘ Why not, my lord?’ answered the doctor. ‘ It
‘ requires no very extraordinary parts, nor any extra-
‘ ordinary degree of virtue. He need practise no great
‘ instances of self-denial. He shall have power, and
‘ honour, and riches, and, perhaps, all in a much
‘ greater degree than he can ever acquire by pursuing
‘ a contrary system. He shall have more of each, and
‘ much more of safety.’

‘ Pray, doctor,’ said my lord, ‘ let me ask you one
‘ simple question. Do you really believe any man
‘ upon earth was ever a rogue out of choice?’

‘ Really, my lord,’ says the doctor, ‘ I am ashamed
‘ to answer in the affirmative; and yet, I am afraid,
‘ experience would almost justify me, if I should.
‘ Perhaps the opinion of the world may sometimes
‘ mislead men to think those measures necessary, which
‘ in reality are not so. Or the truth may be, that a
‘ man of good inclinations finds his office filled with
‘ such

‘such corruption by the iniquity of his predecessors, that he may despair of being capable of purging it; and so sits down contented, as Augeas did with the filth of his stables, not because he thought them the better, or that such filth was really necessary to a stable; but that he despaired of sufficient force to cleanse them.’

‘I will ask you one question more, and I have done,’ said the nobleman. ‘Do you imagine that, if any minister was really as good as you would have him, the people in general would believe that he was so?’

‘Truly, my lord,’ said the doctor, ‘I think they may be justified in not believing too hastily. But I beg leave to answer your lordship’s question by another. Doth your lordship believe that the people of Greenland, when they see the light of the sun, and feel his warmth, after so long a season of cold and darkness, will really be persuaded that he shines upon them?’

My lord smiled at the conceit; and then the doctor took an opportunity to renew his suit, to which his lordship answered he would promise nothing, and could give him no hopes of success: But you may be assured,’ said he with a leering countenance, ‘I shall do him all the service in my power.’ A language which the doctor well understood, and soon after took a civil, but not a very ceremonious leave.

CHAP. III.

The history of Mr. Trent.

WE will now return to Mr. Booth and his wife. The former had spent his time very uneasily, ever since he had discovered what sort of man he was indebted to; but lest he should forget it, Mr. Trent thought now proper to remind him, in the following letter, which he read the next morning after he had put off the appointment.

• S I R,

• I AM sorry the necessity of my affairs obliges me
• to mention that small sum which I had the ho-
• nour to lend you the other night at play; and which
• I shall be much obliged to you, if you will let me
• have some time either to-day, or to-morrow.

• I am, Sir,

• Your most obedient,

• most humble servant,

• George Trent.

This letter a little surprised Booth, after the gentleel, and, indeed, as it appeared, generous behaviour of Trent. But lest it should have the same effect upon the reader, we will now proceed to account for this, as well as for some other phænomena that have appeared in this history, and which, perhaps, we shall be forgiven, for not having opened more largely before.

Mr. Trent then was a gentleman, possibly, of a good family; for it was not certain whence he sprung on the father's side. His mother, who was the only parent he ever knew or heard of, was a single gentlewoman, and for some time carried on the trade of a milliner in Covent-Garden. She sent her son, at the age of eight years old, to a charity-school, where he remained till he was of the age of fourteen, without making any great proficiency in learning. Indeed, it is not very probable he should; for the master, who, in preference to a very learned and proper man, was chosen by a party into this school, the salary of which was upwards of a hundred pounds a year, had himself never travelled through the Latin Grammar, and was in truth a most consummate blockhead.

At the age of fifteen, Mr. Trent was put clerk to an attorney, where he remained a very short time before he took leave of his master; rather, indeed, departed without taking leave; and having broke open his mother's escritore, and carried off with him

all

all the valuable effects he there found, to the amount of about fifty pound, he marched off to sea, and went on board a merchantman, whence he was afterwards pressed into a man of war.

In this service he continued above three years; during which time, he behaved so ill in his moral character, that he twice underwent a very severe discipline for thefts in which he was detected; but at the same time, he behaved so well as a sailor in an engagement with some pirates, that he wiped off all former scores, and greatly recommended himself to his captain.

At his return home, being then about twenty years of age, he found that the attorney had in his absence married his mother, had buried her, and secured all her effects, to the amount, as he was informed, of about fifteen hundred pound. Trent applied to his step-father, but to no purpose; the attorney utterly disowned him, nor would he suffer him to come a second time within his doors.

It happened that the attorney had, by a former wife, an only daughter, a great favourite, who was about the same age with Trent himself; and had, during his residence at her father's house, taken a very great liking to this young fellow, who was extremely handsome, and perfectly well made. This her liking was not, during his absence, so far extinguished, but that it immediately revived on his return. Of this, she took care to give Mr. Trent proper intimation; for she was not one of those backward and delicate ladies, who can die rather than make the first overture. Trent was overjoyed at this, and with reason; for she was a very lovely girl in her person, the only child of a rich father; and the prospect of so complete a revenge on the attorney charmed him above all the rest. To be as short in the matter as the parties, a marriage was soon consummated between them.

The attorney at first raged and was implacable; but at last, fondness for his daughter so far overcame resentment, that he advanced a sum of money to buy his son-

son-in-law (for now he acknowledged himself as such) an ensign's commission in a marching regiment then ordered to Gibraltar; at which place, the attorney heartily hoped that Trent might be knocked on the head: for in that case he thought he might marry his daughter more agreeably to his own ambition, and to her advantage.

The regiment into which Trent purchased, was the same with that in which Booth likewise served; the one being an ensign, and the other a lieutenant, in the two additional companies.

Trent had no blemish in his military capacity. Though he had had but an indifferent education, he was naturally sensible and genteel; and nature, as we have said, had given him a very agreeable person. He was likewise a very bold fellow, and as he really behaved himself every way well enough while he was at Gibraltar, there was some degree of intimacy between him and Booth.

When the siege was over, and the additional companies were again reduced, Trent returned to his wife, who received him with great joy and affection. Soon after this an accident happened, which proved the utter ruin of his father-in-law, and ended in breaking his heart. This was nothing but making a mistake, pretty common at this day, of writing another man's name to a deed instead of his own. In truth, this matter was no less than what the law calls forgery, and was just then made capital by an act of parliament. From this offence, indeed, the attorney was acquitted by not admitting the proof of the party who was to avoid his own deed, by his evidence; and therefore no witness, according to those excellent rules, called the law of evidence; a law very excellently calculated for the preservation of the lives of his majesty's roguish subjects, and most notably used for that purpose.

But though by common law the attorney was honourably acquitted; yet, as Common sense manifested to every one that he was guilty, he unhappily lost his reputation, and of consequence his business; the chagrin of which latter soon put an end to his life.

This

This prosecution had been attended with a very great expence; for, besides the ordinary costs of avoiding the gallows by the help of the law, there was a very high article of no less than a thousand pounds paid down to remove out of the way a witness, against whom there was no legal exception. The poor gentleman had besides suffered some losses in business; so that, to the surprise of all his acquaintance, when his debts were paid, there remained no more than a small estate of fourscore pounds a year, which he settled upon his daughter, far out of the reach of her husband, and about two hundred pounds in money.

The old gentleman had not long been in his grave, before Trent set himself to consider seriously of the state of his affairs. He had lately begun to look on his wife with a much less degree of liking and desire than formerly; for he was one of those who think too much of one thing is good for nothing. Indeed, he had indulged these speculations so far, that, I believe, his wife, though one of the prettiest women in town, was the last subject that he would have chose for any amorous dalliance.

Many other persons however, greatly differed from him in this opinion. Amongst the rest, was the illustrious peer of amorous memory. This noble peer having therefore got a view of Mrs. Trent one day in the street, did, by means of an emissary then with him, make himself acquainted with her lodging, to which he immediately laid siege in form, setting himself down in a lodging directly opposite to her, from whence the battery of ogles began to play the very next morning.

This siege had not continued long before the governor of the garrison became sufficiently apprised of all the works which were carrying on; and having well reconnoitred the enemy, and discovered who he was, notwithstanding a false name and some disguise of his person, he called a council of war within his own breast. In fact, to drop all allegory, he began to consider whether his wife was not really a more valuable possession than he had lately thought her. In short, as he had been disappointed in her fortune, he
now

now conceived some hopes of turning her beauty itself into a fortune.

Without communicating these views to her, he soon scraped an acquaintance with his opposite neighbour by the name which he there usurped, and counterfeited an entire ignorance of his real name and title. On this occasion, Trent had his disguise likewise, for he affected the utmost simplicity; of which affectation, as he was a very artful fellow, he was extremely capable.

The peer fell plump into this snare; and when, by the simplicity, as he imagined, of the husband, he became acquainted with the wife, he was so extravagantly charmed with her person, that he resolved, whatever was the cost or the consequence, he would possess her.

His lordship, however, preserved some caution in his management of this affair; more, perhaps, than was necessary. As for the husband, none was requisite; for he knew all he could; and with regard to the wife herself, as she had, for some time, perceived the decrease of her husband's affection (for few women are, I believe, to be imposed upon in that matter,) she was not displeased to find the return of all that complaisance and endearment, of those looks and languishments, from another agreeable person, which she had formerly received from Trent, and which she now found she should receive from him no longer.

My lord, therefore, having been indulged with as much opportunity as he could wish from Trent, and having received rather more encouragement than he could well have hoped from the lady, began to prepare all matters for a storm; when luckily Mr. Trent declaring he must go out of town for two days, he fixed on the first day of his departure as the time of carrying his design into execution.

And now, after some debate with himself in what manner he should approach his love, he at last determined to do it in his own person; for he conceived, and perhaps very rightly, that the lady, like Semele, was not void of ambition, and would have preferred Jupiter in all his glory to the same deity in the disguise
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of an humble shepherd. He dressed himself therefore in the richest embroidery of which he was master, and appeared before his mistress arrayed in all the brightness of peerage. A sight whose charms she had not the power to resist, and the consequences are only to be imagined. In short, the same scene which Jupiter acted with his above-mentioned mistress of old, was more than beginning, when Trent burst from the closet into which he had conveyed himself, and unkindly interrupted the action.

His lordship presently run to his sword; but Trent, with great calmness, answered, that as it was very well known he durst fight, he should not draw his sword on this occasion: 'For sure,' says he, 'my lord, it would be the highest imprudence in me to kill a man who is now become so considerably my debtor.' At which words, he fetched a person from the closet, who had been confined with him, telling him he had done his business, and might now, if he pleased, retire.

It would be tedious here to amuse the reader with all that passed on the present occasion; the rage and confusion of the wife, or the perplexity in which my lord was involved. We will omit therefore all such matters, and proceed directly to business, as Trent and his lordship did soon after. And in the conclusion, my lord stipulated to pay a good round sum, and to provide Mr. Trent with a good place on the first opportunity.

On the side of Mr. Trent, were stipulated absolute remission of all past, and full indulgence for the time to come.

Trent now immediately took a house at the polite end of the town, furnished it elegantly, and set up his equipage, rigged out both himself and his wife with very handsome cloaths, frequented all public places where he could get admission, pushed himself into acquaintance; and his wife soon afterwards began to keep an assembly, or, in the fashionable phrase, to be at home once a week; when, by my lord's assistance, she was presently visited by most men of the first rank, and by

by all such women of fashion as are not very nice in their company.

My lord's amour with this lady lasted not long; for, as we have before observed, he was the most inconstant of all human race. Mrs. Trent's passion was not however of that kind which leads to any very deep resentment of such fickleness. Her passion, indeed, was principally founded upon interest; so that foundation served to support another superstructure; and she was easily prevailed upon, as well as her husband, to be useful to my lord in a capacity, which, though very often exerted in the polite world, hath not, as yet, to my great surprise, acquired any polite name, or, indeed, any which is not too coarse to be admitted in this history.

After this preface, which we thought necessary to account for a character of which some of my country and collegiate readers might possibly doubt the existence, I shall proceed to what more immediately regards Mrs. Booth. The reader may be pleased to remember that Mr. Trent was present at the assembly to which Booth and his wife were carried by Mrs. James, and where Amelia was met by the noble peer.

His lordship, seeing there that Booth and Trent were old acquaintance, failed not, to use the language of sportsmen, to put Trent on upon the scent of Amelia. For this purpose, that gentleman visited Booth the very next day, and had pursued him close ever since. By his means, therefore, my lord learned that Amelia was to be at the masquerade, to which place she was dogged by Trent in a sailor's jacket, who meeting my lord according to agreement, at the entrance of the opera-house, like the four-legged gentlemen of the same vocation, made a dead point, as it is called, at the game.

My lord was so satisfied and delighted with his conversation at the masquerade with the supposed Amelia, and the encouragement which in reality she had given him, that, when he saw Trent the next morning, he embraced him with great fondness, gave him a bank note of a hundred pound, and promised him both the

Indies

indies on his success, of which he began now to have no manner of doubt.

The affair that happened at the gaming table, was likewise a scheme of Trent's, on a hint given by my lord to him to endeavour to lead Booth into some scrape or distress, his lordship promising to pay whatever expense Trent might be led into by such means. Upon his lordship's credit, therefore, the money lent to Booth was really advanced. And hence arose all that seeming generosity, and indifference as to the payment; Trent being satisfied with the obligation conferred on Booth, by means of which he hoped to effect his purpose.

But now the scene was totally changed; for Mrs. Atkinson, the morning after the quarrel, beginning seriously to recollect that she had carried the matter rather too far, and might really injure Amelia's reputation, a thought to which the warm pursuit of her own interest had a good deal blinded her at the time, resolved to visit my lord himself, and to let him into the whole story; for, as she had succeeded already in her favourite point, she thought she had no reason to fear any consequence of the discovery. This resolution she immediately executed.

Trent came to attend his lordship just after Mrs. Atkinson had left him. He found the peer in a very ill humour, and brought no news to comfort or recruit his spirits; for he had himself just received a billet from Booth, with an excuse for himself and his wife, from accepting the invitation at Trent's house that evening, where matters had been previously concerted for their entertainment; and when his lordship was by accident to drop into the room where Amelia was, while Booth was to be engaged at play in another.

And now after much debate, and after Trent had acquainted my lord with the wretched situation of Booth's circumstances, it was resolved, that Trent should immediately demand his money of Booth, and upon his not paying it, for they both concluded it impossible he should pay it, to put the note which Trent had for the money in suit against him, by the genteel means of paying it away to a nominal third person; and this they

they both conceived must end immediately in the ruin of Booth, and consequently in the conquest of Amelia.

In this project, and with this hope, both my lord and his setter, or (if the sportsmen please) setting-dog, greatly exulted, and it was next morning executed, as we have already seen.

C H A P. IV.

Containing some distress.

TRENT's letter drove Booth almost to madness. To be indebted to such a fellow, at any rate, had stuck much in his stomach, and had given him very great uneasiness; but to answer this demand in any other manner than by paying the money, was absolutely what he could not bear. Again, to pay this money, he very plainly saw there was but one way; and this was by stripping his wife not only of every farthing, but almost of every rag she had in the world; a thought so dreadful, that it chilled his very soul with horror; and yet pride at last seemed to represent this as the lesser evil of the two.

But how to do this was still a question. It was not sure, at least he feared it was not, that Amelia herself would readily consent to this; and so far from persuading her to such a measure, he could not bear even to propose it. At length, his determination was to acquaint his wife with the whole affair, and to ask her consent by way of asking her advice; for he was well assured she could find no other means of extricating him out of his dilemma. This he accordingly did, representing the affair as bad as he could; though, indeed, it was impossible for him to aggravate the real truth.

Amelia heard him patiently, without once interrupting him. When he had finished, she remained silent some time: indeed, the shock she received from this story, almost deprived her of the power of speaking. At last she answered: 'Well, my dear, you ask

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my advice; I certainly can give you no other than that the money must be paid.'

'But how must it be paid?' cries he. 'Oh Heavens! thou sweetest creature, what! not once upbraid me for bringing this ruin on thee!'

'Upbraid you, my dear!' says she—'Would to Heaven, I could prevent your upbraiding yourself. But do not despair. I will endeavour by some means or other to get you the money.'

'Alas! my dear love,' cries Booth, 'I know the only way by which you can raise it. How can I consent to that? do you forget the fears you so lately expressed of what would be our wretched condition, when our little all was mouldered away?—Oh, my Amelia, they cut my very heart-strings, when you spoke them; for I had then lost this little all. Indeed, I assure you, I have not played since, nor ever will more.'

'Keep that resolution,' said she, 'my dear, and I hope we shall yet recover the past.'—At which words, casting her eyes on the children, the tears burst from her eyes, and she cried—'Heaven will, I hope, provide for us.'

A pathetic scene now ensued between the husband and wife, which would not perhaps please many readers to see drawn at too full a length. It is sufficient to say, that this excellent woman not only used her utmost endeavours to stifle and conceal her own concern, but said and did every thing in her power to allay that of her husband.

Booth was at this time to meet a person whom we have formerly mentioned in the course of our history. This gentleman had a place in the war-office, and pretended to be a man of great interest and consequence; by which means he did not only receive great respect and court from the inferiour officers, but actually bubbled several of their money, by undertaking to do them services, which, in reality, were not within his power. In truth, I have known few great men who have not been beset with one or more such fellows as these, through whom the inferiour part of mankind are obliged to make their court to the great men

men themselves; by which means, I believe principally, persons of real merit have been often deterred from the attempt; for these subaltern coxcombs ever assume an equal state with their masters, and look for an equal degree of respect to be paid to them; to which men of spirit, who are in every light their betters, are not easily brought to submit. These fellows, indeed, themselves have a jealous eye towards all great abilities, and are sure, to the utmost of their power, to keep all who are so endowed, from the presence of their masters. They use their masters, as bad ministers have sometimes used a prince; they keep all men of merit from his ears, and daily sacrifice his true honour and interest to their own profit, and their own vanity.

As soon as Booth was gone to his appointment with this man, Amelia immediately betook herself to her business with the highest resolution. She packed up not only her own little trinkets, and those of the children, but the greatest part of her own poor cloaths (for she was but barely provided), and then drove in a hackney-coach to the same pawn-broker's, who had before been recommended to her by Mrs. Atkinson: who advanced her the money she desired.

Being now provided with her sum, she returned well-pleased home; and her husband coming in soon after, she with much chearfulness delivered him all the money.

Booth was so overjoyed with the prospect of discharging his debt to Trent, that he did not perfectly reflect on the distress to which his family was now reduced. The good humour which appeared in the countenance of Amelia, was perhaps another help to stifle those reflexions; but above all, were the assurances he had received from the great man, whom he had met at a coffee-house, and who had promised to do him all the service in his power; which several half-pay subaltern officers assured him was very considerable.

With this comfortable news he acquainted his wife, who either was, or seemed to be extremely well pleased with it. And now he set out with the money in

his

his pocket to pay his friend Trent, who unluckily for him happened not be at home.

On his return home, he met his old friend the lieutenant, who thankfully paid him his crown, and insisted on his going with him and taking part of a bottle. This invitation was so eager and pressing, that poor Booth, who could not resist much importunity, complied.

While they were over this bottle, Booth acquainted his friend with the promises he had received that afternoon at the coffee-house, with which the old gentleman was very well pleased: 'For I have heard,' says he, 'that gentleman hath very powerful interest;' but he informed him likewise, that he had heard that the great man must be touched; for that he never did any thing without touching. Of this, indeed, the great man himself had given some oblique hints, by saying, with great sagacity and slyness, that he knew where fifty pound might be deposited to much advantage.

Booth answered, that he would very readily advance a small sum, if he had it in his power; but that at present it was not so; for that he had no more in the world than the sum of fifty pounds, which he owed Trent, and which he intended to pay him the next morning.

'It is very right undoubtedly to pay your debts,' says the old gentleman; 'but sure, on such an occasion, any man but the rankest usurer would be contented to stay a little while for his money; and it will be only a little while, I am convinced: for if you deposite this sum in the great man's hands, I make no doubt but you will succeed immediately in getting your commission; and then I will help you to a method of taking up such a sum as this.' The old gentleman persisted in this advice, and backed it with every argument he could invent; declaring, as was indeed true, that he gave the same advice which he would pursue, was the case his own.

Booth long rejected the opinion of his friend; till, as they had not argued with dry lips, he became heated with wine, and then at last the old gentleman

succeeded. Indeed, such was his love either for Booth, or for his own opinion, and perhaps for both, that he omitted nothing in his power. He even endeavoured to palliate the character of Trent, and unsaid half what he had before said of that gentleman. In the end he undertook to make Trent easy, and to go to him the very next morning for that purpose.

Poor Booth at last yielded, though with the utmost difficulty. Indeed, had he known quite as much of Trent as the reader doth, no motive whatsoever would have prevailed on him to have taken the old gentleman's advice.

C H A P. V.

Containing more wormwood, and other ingredients.

IN the morning, Booth communicated the matter to Amelia, who told him she would not presume to advise him in an affair, of which he was so much the better judge.

While Booth remained in a doubtful state what conduct to pursue, Bound came to make him a visit, and informed him that he had been at Trent's house, but found him not at home; adding, that he would pay him a second visit that very day, and would not rest till he found him.

Booth was ashamed to confess his wavering resolution, in an affair in which he had been so troublesome to his friend; he therefore dressed himself immediately, and together they both went to wait on the little great man, to whom Booth now hoped to pay his court in the most effectual manner.

Bound had been longer acquainted with the modern methods of business than Booth; he advised his friend therefore to begin with tipping (as it is called) the great man's servant. He did so, and by that means got speedy access to the master.

The great man received the money, not as a gudgeon doth a bait, but as a pike receives a poor gudgeon into his maw. To say the truth, such fellows as these may well be likened to that voracious fish, who fattens himself by devouring all the little inhabitants

of the river. As soon as the great man had pocketed the cash, he shook Booth by the hand, and told him he would be sure to slip no opportunity of serving him, and would send him word as soon as any offered.

Here I shall stop one moment, and so, perhaps, will my good-natured reader; for surely it must be a hard heart, which is not affected, with reflecting on the manner in which this poor little sum was raised, and on the manner in which it was bestowed. A worthy family, the wife and children of a man who had lost his blood abroad in the service of his country, parting with their little all, and exposed to cold and hunger, to pamper such a fellow as this!

And if any such reader, as I mention, should happen to be in reality a great man, and in power, perhaps the horror of this picture may induce him to put a final end to this abominable practice of touching, as it is called; by which indeed a set of leaches are permitted to suck the blood of the brave and the indigent, of the widow and the orphan.

Booth now returned home, where he found his wife with Mrs. James. Amelia had, before the arrival of her husband, absolutely refused Mrs. James's invitation to dinner the next day; but when Booth came in, the lady renewed her application, and that in so pressing a manner, that Booth seconded her; for though he had enough of jealousy in his temper, yet such was his friendship to the colonel, and such his gratitude to the obligations which he had received from him, that his own unwillingness to believe any thing of him, co-operating with Amelia's endeavours to put every thing in the fairest light, had brought him to acquit his friend of any ill design. -To this, perhaps, the late affair concerning my lord had moreover contributed: for it seems to me, that the same passion cannot much energize on two different objects at one and the same time: an observation which I believe will hold as true, with regard to the cruel passions of jealousy and anger, as to the gentle passion of love, in which one great and mighty object is sure to engage the whole passion.

When Booth grew importunate, Amelia answered, ' My dear, I should not refuse you whatever was in my power ; but this is absolutely out of my power ; for, since I must declare the truth, I cannot dress myself.'

' Why so ?' said Mrs. James, ' I am sure you are in good health.'

' Is there no other impediment to dressing but want of health, madam ?' answered Amelia.

' Upon my word none that I know of,' replied Mrs. James.

' What do you think of want of cloaths, madam ?' said Amelia.

' Ridiculous !' cried Mrs. James. ' What need have you to dress yourself out ?—You will see no body but our own family, and I promise you I don't expect it.—A plain night-gown will do very well.'

' But if I must be plain with you, madam,' said Amelia, ' I have no other cloaths but what I have now on my back.——I have not even a clean shift in the world ; for you must know, my dear,' said she to Booth, ' that little Betty is walked off this morning, and hath carried all my linen with her.'

' How, my dear,' cries Booth, ' little Betty robbed you !'

' It is even so,' answered Amelia. Indeed, she spoke truth ; for little Betty having perceived the evening before that her mistress was moving her goods, was willing to lend all the assistance in her power, and had accordingly moved off early that morning, taking with her whatever she could lay her hands on.

Booth expressed himself with some passion on the occasion, and swore he would make an example of the girl. ' If the little slut be above ground,' cried he, ' I will find her out, and bring her to justice.'

' I am really sorry for this accident,' said Mrs. James, ' and (though I know not how to mention it) I beg you'll give me leave to lend you any linen of mine, till you can make new of your own.'

Amelia thanked Mrs. James, but declined the favour, saying, she would do well enough at home ; and that

that as she had no servant now to take care of her children, she could not, nor would not leave them on any account.

'Then bring master and miss with you,' said Mrs. James. 'You shall positively dine with us to-morrow.'

'I beg, madam, you will mention it no more,' said Amelia; 'for, besides the substantial reasons I have already given, I have some things on my mind at present which make me unfit for company; and I am resolved nothing shall prevail on me to stir from home.'

Mrs. James had carried her invitation already to the very utmost limits of good-breeding, if not beyond them. She desisted therefore from going any further, and after some short stay longer took her leave, with many expressions of concern, which, however, great as it was, left her heart and her mouth together, before she was out of the house.

Booth now declared that he would go in pursuit of little Betty, against whom he vowed so much vengeance, that Amelia endeavoured to moderate his anger by representing to him the girl's youth, and that this was the first fault she had ever been guilty of. 'Indeed,' says she, 'I should be very glad to have my things again, and I would have the girl too punished in some degree, which might possibly be for her own good; but I tremble to think of taking away her life:' for Booth in his rage had sworn he would hang her.

'I know the tenderness of your Heart, my dear,' said Booth, 'and I love you for it; but I must beg leave to dissent from your opinion. I do not think the girl in any light an object of mercy. She is not only guilty of dishonesty, but of cruelty: for she must know our situation, and the very little we had left. She is besides guilty of ingratitude to you, who have treated her with so much kindness, that you have rather acted the part of a mother than of a mistress. And so far from thinking her youth an excuse, I think it rather an aggravation. It is true; indeed, there are faults which the youth of the party very strongly recommends to our pardon. Such

‘ are all those which proceed from carelessness, and want of thought; but crimes of this black die, which are committed with deliberation, and imply a bad mind, deserve a more severe punishment in a young person than in one of riper years: for what must the mind be in old age, which hath acquired such a degree of perfection in villainy so very early! such persons as these it is really a charity to the public to put out of the society; and, indeed, a religious man would put them out of the world for the sake of themselves; for whoever understands any thing of human nature must know, that such people, the longer they live, the more they will accumulate vice and wickedness.’

‘ Well, my dear,’ cries Amelia, ‘ I cannot argue with you on these subjects. I shall always submit to your superior judgment, and I know you too well to think that you will ever do any thing cruel.’

Booth then left Amelia to the care of her children, and went in pursuit of the thief.

C H A P. VI.

A scene of the tragic kind.

HE had not been long gone, before a thundering knock was heard at the door of the house where Amelia lodged, and presently after a figure all pale, ghastly, and almost breathless, rushed into the room where she then was with her children.

This figure Amelia soon recognized to be Mrs. Atkinson, though, indeed, she was so disguised, that at her first entrance Amelia scarce knew her. Her eyes were sunk in her head, her hair dishevelled, and not only her dress, but every feature in her face, was in the utmost disorder.

Amelia was greatly shocked at this sight, and the little girl was much frightened; as for the boy, he immediately knew her, and running to Amelia, he cried, ‘ La! mamma, what is the matter with poor Mrs. Atkinson?’

As soon as Mrs. Atkinson recovered her breath, she cried out—— ‘ O Mrs. Booth, I am the most miserable of women ; I have lost the best of husbands.’

Amelia looking at her with all the tenderness imaginable ; forgetting, I believe, that there had ever been any quarrel between them,——said —— ‘ Good Heavens, madam, what’s the matter ?’

‘ O Mrs. Booth,’ answered she, ‘ I fear I have lost my husband. The doctor says, there is but little hope of his life. O madam, however I have been in the wrong, I am sure you will forgive me and pity me. I am sure I am severely punished : for to that cursed affair I owe all my misery.’

‘ Indeed, madam,’ cries Amelia, ‘ I am extremely concerned for your misfortune. But pray tell me hath any thing happened to the serjeant ?’

‘ O madam,’ cries she, ‘ I have the greatest reason to fear I shall lose him. The doctor hath almost given him over.——He says he hath scarce any hopes.——O madam, that evening that the fatal quarrel happened between us, my dear captain took it so to heart, that he sat up all night and drank a whole bottle of brandy.——Indeed, he said, he wished to kill himself : for nothing could have hurt him so much in the world, he said, as to have any quarrel between you and me. His concern, and what he drank together, threw him into a high fever.——So that, when I came home from my lord’s ——(for indeed, madam, I have been and set all to rights—— your reputation is now in no danger) when I came home, I say, I found the poor man in a raving delirious fit, and in that he hath continued ever since till about an hour ago, when he came perfectly to his senses ; but now he says he is sure he shall die, and begs for Heaven’s sake to see you first. Would you, madam, would you have the goodness to grant my poor captain’s desire ; consider he is a dying man, and neither he nor I shall ever ask you a second favour. He says he hath something to say to you that he can mention to no other person, and that he cannot die in peace unless he sees you.’

‘ Upon my word, madam,’ cries Amelia, ‘ I am extremely concerned at what you tell me. I knew the poor serjeant from his infancy, and always had an affection for him, as I think him to be one of the best-natured and honestest creatures upon earth. I am sure, if I could do him any service,—but of what use can my going be ?’—

‘ Of the highest in the world,’ answered Mrs. Atkinson. ‘ If you knew how earnestly he entreated it, how his poor breaking heart begged to see you, you would not refuse.’—

‘ Nay, I do not absolutely refuse,’ cries Amelia. — ‘ Something to say to me of consequence, and that he could not die in peace, unless he said it— Did he say that, Mrs. Atkinson ?’

‘ Upon my honour he did,’ answered she, ‘ and much more than I have related.’

‘ Well, I will go with you,’ cries Amelia. ‘ I cannot guess what this should be ; but I will go.’

Mrs. Atkinson then poured out a thousand blessings and thanksgivings ; and taking hold of Amelia’s hand, and eagerly kissing it, cried out,—‘ How could that fury passion drive me to quarrel with such a creature ?’

Amelia told her she had forgiven and forgot it ; and then calling up the mistress of the house, and committing to her the care of the children, she cloaked herself up as well as she could, and set out with Mrs. Atkinson.

When they arrived at the house, Mrs. Atkinson said she would go first and give the captain some notice ; for that if Amelia entered the room unexpectedly, the surprise might have an ill effect. She left therefore Amelia in the parlour ; and proceeded directly up stairs.

Poor Atkinson, weak and bad as was his condition, no sooner heard that Amelia was come, than he discovered great joy in his countenance, and presently afterwards she was introduced to him.

Atkinson exerted his utmost strength to thank her for this goodness to a dying man (for so he called himself). He said, he should not have presumed to
give

give her this trouble, had he not had something, which he thought of consequence, to say to her, and which he could not mention to any other person. He then desired his wife to give him a little box, of which he always kept the key himself, and afterwards begged her to leave the room for a few minutes; at which, neither she, nor Amelia, expressed any dissatisfaction.

When he was alone with Amelia, he spoke as follows: 'This, madam, is the last time my eyes will ever behold what——Do pardon me, madam, I will never offend you more.'——Here he sunk down in his bed, and the tears gushed from his eyes.

'Why should you fear to offend me, Joe?' said Amelia. 'I am sure, you never did any thing willingly to offend me.'

'No, madam,' answered he, 'I would die a thousand times, before I would have ventured it in the smallest matter. But—I cannot speak—and yet I must. You cannot pardon me, and yet, perhaps, as I am a dying man, and never shall see you more.——Indeed, if I was to live after this discovery, I should never dare to look you in the face again—and yet, madam, to think I shall never see you more is worse than ten thousand deaths.'

'Indeed, Mr. Atkinson,' cries Amelia, blushing, and looking down on the floor, 'I must not hear you talk in this manner. If you have any thing to say, tell it me, and do not be afraid of my anger; for I think I may promise to forgive whatever it was possible you should do.'

'Here then, madam,' said he, 'is your picture; I stole it when I was eighteen years of age, and have kept it ever since. It is set in gold, with three little diamonds; and yet I can truly say, it was not the gold nor the diamonds which I stole—it was that face, which, if I had been the emperor of the world—'

'I must not hear any more of this;' said she—'comfort yourself, Joe, and think no more of this matter. Be assured, I freely and heartily forgive

‘ you—But pray compose yourself; come, let me call in your wife.’——

‘ First, madam, let me beg one favour’—cried he, ‘ consider it is the last, and then I shall die in peace—let me kiss that hand before I die.’

‘ Well, nay,’ says she, ‘ I don’t know what I am doing—well—there—.’ She then carelessly gave him her hand, which he put gently to his lips, and then presently let it drop, and fell back into the bed.

Amelia now summoned Mrs. Atkinson, who was indeed no further off than just without the door. She then hastened down stairs and called for a great glass of water, which having drank off, she threw herself into a chair, and the tears ran plentifully from her eyes with compassion for the poor wretch she had just left in his bed.

To say the truth, without any injury to her chastity, that heart which had stood firm as a rock to all the attacks of title and equipage, of finery and flattery, and which all the treasures of the universe could not have purchased, was yet a little softened by the plain, honest, modest, involuntary, delicate, heroic passion of this poor and humble swain: for whom, in spite of herself, she felt a momentary tenderness and complacency, at which Booth, if he had known it, would perhaps have been displeased.

Having staid some time in the parlour, and not finding Mrs. Atkinson come down, (for indeed her husband was then so bad she could not quit him) Amelia left a message with the maid of the house for her mistress, purporting that she should be ready to do any thing in her power to serve her, and then left the house with a confusion on her mind that she had never felt before, and which any chastity that is not hewn out of marble must feel on so tender and delicate an occasion.

C H A P. VII.

In which Mr. Booth meets with more than one adventure.

BOOTH having hunted about for two hours, at last saw a young lady in a tattered silk gown, stepping out of a shop in Monmouth-Street into a hackney coach. This lady, notwithstanding the disguise of her dress, he presently discovered to be no other than little Betty.

He instantly gave the alarm of 'stop thief, stop coach;' upon which, Mrs. Betty was immediately stopped in her vehicle, and Booth and his myrmidons laid hold of her.

The girl no sooner found that she was seized by her master, than the consciousness of her guilt overpowered her; for she was not yet an experienced offender, and she immediately confessed her crime.

She was then carried before a justice of the peace, where she was searched, and there was found in her possession four shillings and six-pence in money, besides the silk gown, which was indeed proper furniture for Rag-fair, and scarce worth a single farthing, though the honest shop-keeper in Monmouth-street had sold it for a crown to this simple girl.

The girl being examined by the magistrate, spoke as follows: 'Indeed, sir, an't please your worship, I am very sorry for what I have done; and to be sure, an't please your honour, my lord, it must have been the devil that put me upon it; for to be sure, please your majesty, I never thought upon such a thing in my whole life before, any more than I did of my dying day; but, indeed, sir, an't please your worship——'

She was running on in this manner, when the justice interrupted her, and desired her to give an account of what she had taken from her master, and what she had done with it.

'Indeed, an't please your majesty,' said she, 'I took no more than two shifts of madam's, and I pawned them for five shillings, which I gave for the gown that's upon my back; and as for the mo-

‘ney in my pocket, it is every farthing of it my own.
‘I am sure I intended to carry back the shifts too as
‘soon as ever I could get money to take them out.’

The girl having told them where the pawnbroker lived, the justice sent to him, to produce the shifts, which he presently did; for he expected that a warrant to search his house would be the consequence of his refusal.

The shifts being produced, on which the honest pawnbroker had lent five shillings, appeared plainly to be worth above thirty; indeed, when new, they had cost much more. So that by their goodness, as well as by their size, it was certain they could not have belonged to the girl.

Booth grew very warm against the pawnbroker. ‘I hope, sir,’ said he to the justice, ‘there is some punishment for this fellow likewise, who so plainly appears to have known that these goods were stolen. The shops of these fellows may indeed be called the fountains of theft; for it is in reality the encouragement which they meet with from these receivers of their goods that induces men very often to become thieves; so that these deserve equal, if not severer punishment than the thieves themselves.’

The pawnbroker protested his innocence; and denied the taking in the shifts. Indeed, in this he spoke truth; for he had slipped into an inner room, as was always his custom on these occasions, and left a little boy to do the business; by which means he had carried on the trade of receiving stolen goods for many years with impunity, and had been twice acquitted at the Old-Baily, though the juggle appeared upon the most manifest evidence.

As the justice was going to speak, he was interrupted by the girl, who falling upon her knees to Booth with many tears, begged his forgiveness.

‘Indeed, Betty,’ cries Booth, ‘you do not deserve forgiveness; for you know you had very good reasons why you should not have thought of robbing your mistress, particularly at this time. And what further aggravates your crime, is, that you have robbed the best and kindest mistress in the world.’

‘Nay,

‘Nay, you are not only guilty of felony, but of a felonious breach of trust; for you know very well every thing your mistress had, was intrusted to your care.’

Now it happened by very great accident that the justice before whom the girl was brought, understood the law. Turning therefore to Booth, he said, ‘Do you say, sir, that this girl was intrusted with the shifts?’

‘Yes, sir,’ said Booth, ‘she was intrusted with every thing?’

‘And will you swear that the goods stolen,’ said the justice, ‘are worth forty shillings?’

‘No, indeed, sir,’ answered Booth, ‘nor that they are worth thirty either.’

‘Then, sir,’ cries the justice, ‘the girl cannot be guilty of felony.’

‘How, sir,’ said Booth, ‘is it not a breach of trust? and is not a breach of trust felony, and the worst felony too?’

‘No, sir,’ answered the justice, ‘a breach of trust is no crime in our law, unless it be in a servant; and then the act of parliament requires the goods taken to be of the value of forty shillings.’

‘So then a servant,’ cries Booth, ‘may rob his master of thirty nine shillings whenever he pleases, and he can’t be punished.’

‘If the goods are under his care, he can’t,’ cries the justice.

‘I ask your pardon, sir,’ says Booth. ‘I do not doubt what you say; but sure this is a very extraordinary law.’

‘Perhaps I think so too,’ said the justice; ‘but it belongs not to my office to make or to mend laws. My business is only to execute them. If therefore the case be as you say, I must discharge the girl.’

‘I hope, however, you will punish the pawnbroker,’ cries Booth.

‘If the girl is discharged,’ cries the justice, ‘so must be the pawnbroker: for if the goods are not stolen, he cannot be guilty of receiving them, knowing them to be stolen. And besides, as to his offence, to say the truth, I am almost weary of prosecuting

‘ it; for such are the difficulties laid in the way of
‘ this prosecution, that it is almost impossible to cen-
‘ vict any one on it. And to speak my opinion plainly,
‘ such are the laws, and such the method of proceed-
‘ ing, that one would almost think our laws were ra-
‘ ther made for the protection of rogues, than for the
‘ punishment of them.’

Thus ended this examination; the thief and the receiver went about their business, and Booth departed in order to go home to his wife.

In his way home, Booth was met by a lady in a chair; who, immediately upon seeing him, stooped her chair, bolted out of it, and going directly up to him, said: ‘ So, Mr. Booth, you have kept your word
‘ with me.’

This lady was no other than Miss Matthews, and the speech she meant was of a promise made to her at the masquerade, of visiting her within a day or two; which, whether he ever intended to keep I cannot say, but in truth, the several accidents that had since happened to him, had so discomposed his mind, that he had absolutely forgot it.

Booth however was too sensible, and too well bred, to make the excuse of forgetfulness to a lady; nor could he readily find any other. While he stood therefore hesitating, and looking not over wise, Miss Matthews said: ‘ Well, sir, since by your confusion
‘ I see you have some grace left, I will pardon you on
‘ one condition, and that is, that you will sup with
‘ me this night. But if you fail me now, expect all
‘ the revenge of an injured woman.’ She then bound herself by a most outrageous oath, that she would complain to his wife—— ‘ And I am sure,’ says she,
‘ she is so much a woman of honour, as to do me
‘ justice.—And though I miscarried in my first at-
‘ tempt, be assured I will take care of my second.’

Booth asked what she meant by her first attempt; to which she answered, that she had already writ his wife an account of his ill usage of her, but that she was pleased it had miscarried. She then repeated her asseverations, that she would now do it effectually if he disappointed her.

This threat she reckoned would most certainly terrify poor Booth; and, indeed, she was not mistaken; for I believe it would have been impossible, by any other menace, or by any other means, to have brought him once even to balance in his mind on this question. But by this threat she prevailed; and Booth promised, upon his word and honour, to come to her at the hour she appointed. After which, she took leave of him with a squeeze by the hand, and a smiling countenance, and walked back to her chair.

But, however she might be pleased with having obtained this promise, Booth was far from being delighted with the thoughts of having given it. He looked indeed upon the consequences of this meeting with horror; but as to the consequence which was so apparently intended by the lady, he resolved against it. At length he came to this determination; to go, according to his appointment, to argue the matter with the lady, and to convince her, if possible, that from a regard to his honour only, he must discontinue her acquaintance. If this failed to satisfy her, and she still persisted in her threats to acquaint his wife with the affair, he then resolved, whatever pains it cost him, to communicate the whole truth himself to Amelia, from whose goodness he doubted not but to obtain an absolute remission.

C H A P. VIII.

*In which Amelia appears in a light more amiable than
gay.*

WE will now return to Amelia, whom we left in some perturbation of mind departing from Mrs. Atkinson.

Though she had before walked through the streets in a very improper dress with Mrs. Atkinson, she was unwilling, especially as she was alone, to return in the same manner. Indeed, she was scarce able to walk in her present condition; for the case of poor Atkinson had much affected her tender heart, and her eyes had overflowed with many tears.

It

It occurred likewise to her at present, that she had not a single shilling in her pocket, or at home, to provide food for herself and her family. In this situation she resolved to go immediately to the pawnbroker whither she had gone before, and to deposite her picture for what she could raise upon it. She then immediately took a chair, and put her design in execution.

The intrinsic value of the gold, in which this picture was set, and of the little diamonds which surrounded it, amounted to nine guineas. This therefore was advanced to her, and the prettiest face in the world (such is often the fate of beauty) was deposited, as of no value, into the bargain.

When she came home, she found the following letter from Mrs. Atkinson :

‘ My dearest Madam,

‘ **A**S I know your goodness, I could not delay
‘ a moment acquainting you with the happy turn
‘ of my affairs since you went. The doctor, on his
‘ return to visit my husband, has assured me, that the
‘ captain was on the recovery, and in very little dan-
‘ ger ; and I really think he is since mended. I hope
‘ to wait on you soon with better news. Heaven bless
‘ you, dear madam ; and believe me to be, with the
‘ utmost sincerity,

‘ Your most obliged,

‘ obedient humble servant,

‘ Atkinson.’

Amelia was really pleased with this letter ; and now it being past four o’clock, she despaired of seeing her husband till the evening. She therefore provided some tarts for her children, and then eating nothing but a slice of bread and butter herself, she began to prepare for the captain’s supper.

There were two things of which her husband was particularly fond, which, though it may bring the simplicity of his taste into great contempt with some of my readers, I will venture to name. These were a

fowl and egg sauce, and mutton broth ; both which Amelia immediately purchased.

As soon as the clock struck seven, the good creature went down into the kitchen, and began to exercise her talents of cookery, of which she was a great mistress, as she was of every economical office, from the highest to the lowest ; and as no woman could outshine her in a drawing-room, so none could make the drawing-room itself shine brighter than Amelia. And if I may speak a bold truth, I question whether it be possible to view this fine creature in a more amiable light, than while she was dressing her husband's supper with her little children playing round her.

It was now half an hour past eight, and the meat almost ready, the table likewise neatly spread with materials borrowed from her landlady, and she began to grow a little uneasy at Booth's not returning ; when a sudden knock at the door roused her spirits, and she cried, ' There, my dear, there is your good ' papa ;' at which words she darted swiftly up stairs, and opened the door to her husband.

She desired her husband to walk up into the dining-room, and she would come to him in an instant ; for she was desirous to encrease his pleasure, by surprising him with his two favourite dishes. She then went down again to the kitchen, where the maid of the house undertook to send up the supper, and she with her children returned to Booth.

He then told her concisely what had happened, with relation to the girl — To which she scarce made any answer ; but asked him if he had not dined. He assured her he had not eat a morsel the whole day. ' Well,' says she, ' my dear, I am a fellow-sufferer ; but we shall both enjoy our supper the more ; for I have made a little provision for you, as I guessed what might be the case. I have got you a bottle of wine too. And here is a clean cloth and a smiling countenance, my dear Will. Indeed, I am in unusual good spirits to-night, and I have made a promise to the children, which you must confirm ; I have promised to let them sit up this one night to supper with us. — Nay, don't look so serious ; cast
off

‘ off all uneasy thoughts—I have a present for you here—No matter how I came by it.’ — At which words, she put eight guineas into his hand, crying: ‘ Come, my dear Bill, be gay—Fortune will yet be kind to us—at least, let us be happy this night. Indeed, the pleasures of many women, during their whole lives, will not amount to my happiness this night, if you will be in good humour.’

Booth fetched a deep sigh, and cried—‘ How unhappy am I, my dear, that I can’t sup with you to-night!’

As in the delightful month of June, when the sky is all serene, and the whole face of nature looks with a pleasing and smiling aspect, suddenly a dark cloud spreads itself over the hemisphere, the sun vanishes from our sight, and every object is obscured by a dark and horrid gloom. So happened it to Amelia; the joy that had enlightened every feature disappeared in a moment; the lustre forsook her shining eyes; and all the little loves, that played and wantoned in her cheeks, hung their drooping heads, and with a faint trembling voice, she repeated her husband’s words: ‘ Not sup with me to-night, my dear!’

‘ Indeed, my dear,’ answered he, ‘ I cannot. I need not tell you how uneasy it makes me, or that I am as much disappointed as yourself; but I am engaged to sup abroad. I have absolutely given my honour; and besides, it is on business of importance.’

‘ My dear,’ said she, ‘ I say no more. I am convinced you would not willingly sup from me. I own it is a very particular disappointment to me to-night, when I had proposed unusual pleasure; but the same reason which is sufficient to you, ought to be so to me.’

Booth made his wife a compliment on her ready compliance, and then asked her, what she intended by giving him that money, or how she came by it.

‘ I intend, my dear,’ said she, ‘ to give it you; that is all. As to the manner in which I came by it, you know, Billy, that is not very material. You are well assured I got it by no means which would displease you; and, perhaps, another time I may tell you.’

Booth

Booth asked no farther questions; but he returned it, and insisted on her taking all but one guinea, saying, she was the safest treasurer. He then promised her to make all the haste home in his power, and he hoped, he said, to be with her in an hour and half at farthest, and then took his leave.

When he was gone, the poor disappointed Amelia sat down to supper with her children; with whose company she was forced to console herself for the absence of her husband.

C H A P. IX.

A very tragic scene.

THE clock had struck eleven, and Amelia was just proceeding to put her children to bed, when she heard a knock at the street door. Upon which the boy cried out, 'There's papa, mamma, pray let me stay and see him before I go to bed.' This was a favour very easily obtained; for Amelia instantly ran down stairs, exulting in the goodness of her husband for returning so soon, though half an hour was already elapsed beyond the time in which he promised to return.

Poor Amelia was now again disappointed; for it was not her husband at the door, but a servant with a letter for him, which he delivered into her hands. She immediately returned up stairs, and said—'It was not your papa, my dear; but I hope it is one who hath brought us some good news.' For Booth had told her, that he hourly expected to receive such from the great man, and had desired her to open any letter which came to him in his absence.

Amelia therefore broke open the letter, and read as follows:

'S I R,

AFTER what hath past between us, I need only tell you that I know you supped this very night alone with Miss Matthews: a fact which will upbraid you sufficiently, without putting me to that trouble,

‘trouble, and will very well account for my desiring
 ‘the favour of seeing you to-morrow in Hyde-Park at
 ‘fix in the morning. You will forgive my remind-
 ‘ing you once more how inexcusable this behaviour
 ‘is in you who are possessed in your own wife of the
 ‘most inestimable jewel.

‘Yours, &c.

‘T. James.

‘I shall bring pistols with me.’

It is not easy to describe the agitation of Amelia’s mind when she read this letter. She threw herself into her chair, turned as pale as death, began to tremble all over, and had just power enough left to tap the bottle of wine, which she had hitherto preserved entire for her husband, and to drink off a large bumper.

The little boy perceived the strange symptoms which appeared in his mother; and running to her, he cried, ‘What’s the matter, my dear mamma, you
 ‘don’t look well?—No harm hath happened to poor
 ‘papa, I hope—Sure that bad man hath not carried
 ‘him away again.’

Amelia answered, ‘No, child, nothing—nothing
 ‘at all.’—And then a large shower of tears came to her assistance; which presently after produced the same in the eyes of both the children.

Amelia, after a short silence, looking tenderly at her children, cried out, ‘It is too much, too much to
 ‘bear. Why did I bring these little wretches into
 ‘the world! why were these innocents born to such
 ‘a fate!’—She then threw her arms round them both, (for they were before embracing her knees) and cried,
 ‘O my children! my children, forgive me, my
 ‘babes—Forgive me that I have brought you into
 ‘such a world as this. You are undone—my children
 ‘are undone.’

The little boy answered with great spirit, ‘How
 ‘undone, mamma? my sister and I don’t care a far-
 ‘thing for being undone—Don’t cry so upon our ac-
 ‘counts—we are both very well; indeed we are—But
 ‘do

‘do pray tell us. I am sure some accident hath happened to poor papa.’

‘Mention him no more,’ cries Amelia, ‘your papa is—indeed he is a wicked man—he cares not for any of us——O Heavens, is this the happiness I promised myself this evening!’—At which words she fell into an agony, holding both her children in her arms.

The maid of the house now entered the room, with a letter in her hand, which she had received from a porter, whose arrival the reader will not wonder to have been unheard by Amelia in her present condition.

The maid, upon her entrance into the room, perceiving the situation of Amelia, cried out, ‘Good Heavens! madam, what’s the matter?’ Upon which, Amelia, who had a little recovered herself after the last violent vent of her passion, started up, and cried—‘Nothing, Mrs. Susan—nothing extraordinary. I am subject to these fits sometimes; but I am very well now. Come, my dear children, I am very well again; indeed I am. You must now go to bed; Mrs. Susan will be so good as to put you to bed.’

‘But why doth not papa love us?’ cries the little boy, ‘I am sure we have none of us done any thing to disoblige him.’

This innocent question of the child so stung Amelia, that she had the utmost difficulty to prevent a relapse. However she took another dram of wine; for so it might be called to her, who was the most temperate of women, and never exceeded three glasses on any occasion. In this glass she drank her children’s health, and soon after so well soothed and composed them, that they went quietly away with Mrs. Susan.

The maid, in the shock she had conceived at the melancholy, indeed frightful scene, which had presented itself to her at her first coming into the room, had quite forgot the letter, which she held in her hand. However, just at her departure, she recollected it, and delivered it to Amelia; who was no sooner alone, than she opened it, and read as follows:

‘My

‘ My dearest sweetest love,

‘ **I** Write this from the bailiff’s house, where I was
‘ formerly, and to which I am again brought at
‘ the suit of that villain, Trent. I have the misfor-
‘ tune to think I owe this accident (I mean, that it
‘ happened to-night) to my own folly, in endeavour-
‘ ing to keep a secret from you — O my dear, had I
‘ had resolution to confess my crime to you, your for-
‘ giveness would, I am convinced, have cost me only
‘ a few blushes, and I had now been happy in your
‘ arms. Fool that I was, to leave you on such an ac-
‘ count, and to add to a former transgression a new
‘ one.—Yet by Heavens I mean not a transgression of
‘ the like kind; for of that I am not, nor ever will be
‘ guilty; and when you know the true reason of my
‘ leaving you to-night, I think you will pity, rather
‘ than upbraid me. I am sure you would, if you
‘ knew the compunction with which I left you to go
‘ to the most worthless, the most infamous——Do
‘ guess the rest——Guess that crime with which
‘ I cannot stain my paper——but still believe me no
‘ more guilty than I am—or, if it will lessen your
‘ vexation at what hath befallen me, believe me as
‘ guilty as you please, and think me for a while, at
‘ least, as undeserving of you, as I think myself.
‘ This paper and pen are so bad, I question whether
‘ you can read what I write; I almost doubt whether
‘ I wish you should. Yet this I will endeavour to
‘ make as legible as I can——Be comforted, my dear
‘ love, and still keep up your spirits with the hopes of
‘ better days. The doctor will be in town to-morrow,
‘ and I trust on his goodness for my delivery once
‘ more from this place, and that I shall soon be able
‘ to repay him. That Heaven may bless and preserve
‘ you, is the prayer of,

‘ My dearest love,

‘ Your ever fond, affectionate,

‘ and hereafter faithful husband,

‘ W. Booth.’

Amelia

Amelia pretty well guessed the obscure meaning of this letter, which though, at another time, it might have given her unspeakable torment, was at present rather of the medicinal kind, and served to allay her anguish. Her anger to Booth too began a little to abate, and was softened by her concern for his misfortune. Upon the whole, however, she passed a miserable and sleepless night, her gentle mind torn and distracted with various and contending passions, distressed with doubts, and wandering in a kind of twilight, which presented her only objects of different degrees of horror; and where black despair closed at a small distance the gloomy prospect.

A M E L I A.

B O O K XII.

C H A P. I.

The book begins with polite history.

BEFORE we return to the miserable couple, whom we left at the end of the last book, we will give our reader the more chearful view of the gay and happy family of Colonel James.

Mrs. James, when she could not, as we have seen, prevail with Amelia to accept that invitation, which, at the desire of the colonel, she had so kindly and obediently carried her, returned to her husband, and acquainted him with the ill success of her embassy; at which, to say the truth, she was almost as much disappointed as the colonel himself: for he had not taken a much stronger liking to Amelia, than she herself had conceived for Booth. This will account for some passages, which may have a little surprised the reader in the former chapters of this history, as we were not then at leisure to communicate to them a hint of this kind: it was indeed on Mr. Booth's account that she had been at the trouble of changing her dress at the masquerade.

But her passions of this sort, happily for her, were not extremely strong; she was therefore easily baulked, and as she met with no encouragement from Booth, she soon gave way to the impetuosity of Miss Matthews; and from that time scarce thought more of the affair, till her husband's design against the wife revived her's likewise; insomuch, that her passion was,

at

at this time, certainly strong enough for Booth, to produce a good hearty hatred for Amelia, whom she now abused to the colonel in very gross terms; both on the account of her poverty, and her insolence: for so she termed the refusal of all her offers.

The colonel, seeing no hopes of soon possessing his new mistress, began, like a prudent and wise man, to turn his thoughts towards the securing his old one. From what his wife had mentioned, concerning the behaviour of the shepherdes, and particularly her preference of Booth, he had little doubt but that this was the identical Miss Matthews. He resolved therefore to watch her closely, in hopes of discovering Booth's intrigue with her. In this, besides the remainder of affection which he yet preserved for that lady, he had another view, as it would give him a fair pretence to quarrel with Booth; who, by carrying on this intrigue, would have broke his word and honour given to him. And he began now to hate poor Booth heartily, from the same reason from which Mrs. James had contracted her aversion to Amelia.

The colonel therefore employed an inferior kind of pimp to watch the lodgings of Miss Matthews, and to acquaint him if Booth, whose person was known to the pimp, made any visit there

The pimp faithfully performed his office, and having last night made the wished-for discovery, immediately acquainted his master with it.

Upon this news, the colonel presently dispatched to Booth the short note which we have before seen. He sent it to his own house instead of Miss Matthews's, with hopes of that very accident which actually did happen. Not that he had any ingredient of the bully in him, and desired to be prevented from fighting, but with a prospect of injuring Booth in the affection and esteem of Amelia, and of recommending himself somewhat to her by appearing in the light of her champion; for which purpose he added that compliment to Amelia in his letter. He concluded upon the whole, that, if Booth himself opened the letter, he would certainly meet him the next morning; but if his wife should open it before he came home, it might have the effects

fects before mentioned ; and for his future expostulation with Booth, it would not be in Amelia's power to prevent it.

Now it happened, that this pimp had more masters than one. Amongst these, was the worthy Mr. Trent, for whom he had often done business of the pimping vocation. He had been employed indeed in the service of the great peer himself, under the direction of the said Trent, and was the very person who had assisted the said Trent in dogging Booth and his wife to the opera-house on the masquerade night.

This subaltern pimp was with his superior Trent yesterday morning, when he found a bailiff with him in order to receive his instructions for the arresting Booth ; when the bailiff said it would be a very difficult matter to take him ; for that, to his knowledge, he was as shy a cock as any in England. The subaltern immediately acquainted Trent with the business in which he was employed by the colonel. Upon which, Trent enjoined him the moment he had set him to give immediate notice to the bailiff ; which he agreed to, and performed accordingly.

The bailiff, on receiving the notice, immediately set out for his stand at an alehouse within three doors of Miss Matthews's lodgings. At which, unfortunately for poor Booth, he arrived a very few minutes before Booth left that lady in order to return to Amelia.

These were several matters, of which we thought necessary our reader should be informed ; for, besides that it conduces greatly to a perfect understanding of all history, there is no exercise of the mind of a sensible reader more pleasant than the tracing of the several small and almost imperceptible links in every chain of events, by which all the great actions of the world are produced. We will now in the next chapter proceed with our history.

CHAP. II.

In which Amelia visits her husband.

AMELIA, after much anxious thinking, in which she sometimes flattered herself that her husband was less guilty than she had at first imagined him, and that he had some good excuse to make for himself (for, indeed, she was not so able as willing to make one for him); at length resolved to set out for the bailiff's castle. Having therefore strictly recommended the care of her children to her good landlady, she sent for a hackney-coach, and ordered the coachman to drive to Gray's-Inn-Lane.

When she came to the house, and asked for the captain, the bailiff's wife, who came to the door, guessing, by the greatness of her beauty and the disorder of her dress, that she was a young lady of pleasure, answered furlily, 'Captain! I do not know of any captain that is here, not I;' for this good woman was, as well as dame Purgante in Prior, a bitter enemy to all whores, especially to those of the handsome kind; for some such she expected to go shares with her in a certain property to which the law gave her the sole right.

Amelia replied, she was certain that Captain Booth was there. 'Well, if he is so,' cries the bailiff's wife, 'you may come into the kitchen, if you will—and he shall be called down to you if you have any business with him.' At the same time she muttered something to herself, and concluded a little more intelligibly, though still in a muttering voice, that she kept no such house.

Amelia, whose innocence gave her no suspicion of the true cause of this good woman's sullenness, was frightened, and began to fear she knew not what. At last she made a shift to totter into the kitchen, when the mistress of the house asked her, 'Well, madam, who shall I tell the captain wants to speak with him?'

'I ask your pardon, madam,' cries Amelia, 'in my confusion, I really forgot you did not know me—tell him, if you please, that I am his wife.'

‘And are you indeed his wife, madam?’ cries Mrs. Bailiff, a little softened.

‘Yes, indeed, and upon my honour,’ answers Amelia.

‘If this be the case,’ cries the other, ‘you may walk up stairs, if you please. Heaven forbid, I should part man and wife. Indeed, I think they can never be too much together. But I never will suffer any bad doings in my house, nor any of the town ladies to come to gentlemen here.’

Amelia answered, that she liked her the better; for, indeed, in her present disposition, Amelia was as much exasperated against wicked women as the virtuous mistress of the house, or any other virtuous woman, could be.

The bailiff’s wife then ushered Amelia up stairs, and having unlocked the prisoners doors, cried, ‘Captain, here is your lady, sir, come to see you.’ At which words, Booth started up from his chair, and caught Amelia in his arms, embracing her for a considerable time with so much rapture, that the bailiff’s wife, who was an eye-witness of this violent fondness, began to suspect whether Amelia had really told her truth. However, she had some little awe of the captain, and for fear of being in the wrong did not interfere, but shut the door and turned the key.

When Booth found himself alone with his wife, and had vented the first violence of his rapture in kisses and embraces, he looked tenderly at her, and cried, ‘Is it possible, Amelia, is it possible you can have this goodness to follow such a wretch as me to such a place as this?—or do you come to upbraid me with my guilt, and to sink me down to that perdition I so justly deserve?’

‘Am I so given to upbraiding then?’ says she, in a gentle voice; ‘have I ever given you occasion to think I would sink you to perdition?’

‘Far be it from me, my love, to think so,’ answered he. ‘And yet you may forgive the utmost fears of an offending, penitent sinner. I know, indeed, the extent of your goodness, and yet I know my guilt so great——’

‘Alas!

‘Alas! Mr. Booth,’ said she, ‘What guilt is this which you mention, and which you writ to me of last night——Sure, by your mentioning to me so much, you intend to tell me more, nay, indeed, to tell me all—and not leave my mind open to suspicions perhaps ten times worse than the truth.’

‘Will you give me a patient hearing?’ said he.

‘I will, indeed,’ answered she; ‘nay, I am prepared to hear the worst you can unfold; nay, perhaps, the worst is short of my apprehensions.’

Booth then, after a little further apology, began and related to her the whole that had passed between him and Miss Matthews, from their first meeting in the prison to their separation the preceding evening. All which, as the reader knows it already, it would be tedious and unpardonable to transcribe from his mouth. He told her likewise all that he had done and suffered, to conceal his transgression from her knowledge. This, he assured her, was the business of his visit last night; the consequence of which was, he declared in the most solemn manner, no other than an absolute quarrel with Miss Matthews, of whom he had taken a final leave.

When he had ended his narration, Amelia, after a short silence, answered,—‘Indeed, I firmly believe every word you have said—but I cannot now forgive you the fault you have confessed—and my reason is—because I have forgiven it long ago. Here, my dear,’ said she, ‘is an instance that I am likewise capable of keeping a secret.’——She then delivered her husband a letter, which she had some time ago received from Miss Matthews, and which was the same which that lady had mentioned, and supposed, as Booth had never heard of it, that it had miscarried; for she sent it by the penny-post. In this letter, which was signed by a feigned name, she had acquainted Amelia with the infidelity of her husband, and had besides very greatly abused him; taxing him with many falsehoods; and, among the rest, with having spoken very slightly and disrespectfully of his wife.

Amelia never shined forth to Booth in so amiable and great a light; nor did his own unworthiness ever

appear to him so mean and contemptible, as at this instant. However, when he had read the letter, he uttered many violent protestations to her, that all which related to herself was absolutely false.

‘ I am convinced it is,’ said she. ‘ I would not have a suspicion of the contrary for the world. I assure you I had, till last night revived it in my memory, almost forgot the letter ; for, as I well knew from whom it came, by her mentioning obligations which she had conferred on you, and which you had more than once spoken to me of, I made large allowances for the situation you was then in ; and I was the more satisfied, as the letter itself, as well as many other circumstances, convinced me the affair was at an end.’

Booth now uttered the most extravagant expressions of admiration and fondness that his heart could dictate, and accompanied them with the warmest embraces. All which warmth and tenderness she returned ; and tears of love and joy gushed from both their eyes. So ravished indeed were their hearts, that for some time they both forgot the dreadful situation of their affairs.

This, however, was but a short reverie. It soon recurred to Amelia, that, though she had the liberty of leaving that house when she pleased, she could not take her beloved husband with her. This thought stung her tender husband to the quick ; and she could not so far command herself, as to refrain from many sorrowful exclamations against the hardship of their destiny ; but when she saw the effect they had upon Booth, she stifled her rising grief, forced a little cheerfulness into her countenance, and exerting all the spirits she could raise within herself, expressed her hopes of seeing a speedy end to their sufferings. She then asked her husband what she should do for him, and to whom she should apply for his deliverance.

‘ You know, my dear,’ cries Booth, ‘ that the doctor is to be in town some time to-day. My hopes of immediate redemption are only in him ; and if that can be obtained, I make no doubt but of the success of that affair which is in the hands of a gentleman

‘tleman who hath faithfully promised, and in whose power I am so well assured it is, to serve me.’

Thus did this poor man support his hopes by a dependance on that ticket which he had so dearly purchased of one who pretended to manage the wheels in the great state lottery of preferment. A lottery indeed, which hath this to recommend it, that many poor wretches feed their imaginations with the prospect of a prize during their whole lives, and never discover they have drawn a blank.

Amelia, who was of a pretty sanguine temper, and was entirely ignorant of these matters, was full as easy to be deceived into hopes as her husband; but in reality at present she turned her eyes to no distant prospect; the desire of regaining her husband’s liberty having engrossed her whole mind.

While they were discoursing on these matters, they heard a violent noise in the house, and immediately after several persons passed by their door up stairs to the apartment over their head. This greatly terrified the gentle spirit of Amelia, and she cried—‘ Good Heavens! my dear, must I leave you in this horrid place? I am terrified with a thousand fears concerning you.’

Booth endeavoured to comfort her, saying, that he was in no manner of danger, and that he doubted not but that the doctor would soon be with him.—‘ And stay, my dear,’ cries he, ‘ now I recollect, suppose you should apply to my old friend James; for I believe you are pretty well satisfied, that your apprehensions of him were groundless. I have no reason to think but that he would be as ready to serve me as formerly.’

Amelia turned pale as ashes at the name of James, and, instead of making a direct answer to her husband, she laid hold of him, and cried, ‘ My dear, I have one favour to beg of you, and I insist on your granting it me.’

Booth readily swore he would deny her nothing.

‘ It is only this, my dear,’ said she, ‘ that, if that detested colonel comes, you will not see him. Let the people of the house tell him you are not here.’

‘He knows nothing of my being here,’ answered Booth; ‘but why should I refuse to see him, if he should be kind enough to come hither to me? Indeed, my Amelia, you have taken a dislike to that man without sufficient reason.’

‘I speak not upon that account,’ cries Amelia; but ‘I have had dreams last night about you two. Perhaps you will laugh at my folly; but pray indulge it. Nay, I insist on your promise of not denying me.’

‘Dreams! my dear creature,’ answered he. ‘What dream can you have had of us?’

‘One too horrible to be mentioned,’ replied she. — ‘I cannot think of it without horror; and, unless you will promise me not to see the colonel till I return, I positively will never leave you.’

‘Indeed, my Amelia,’ said Booth, ‘I never knew you unreasonable before. How can a woman of your sense talk of dreams?’

‘Suffer me to be once at least unreasonable,’ said Amelia; ‘as you are so good-natured to say I am not often so. Consider, what I have lately suffered, and how weak my spirits must be at this time.’

As Booth was going to speak, the bailiff without any ceremony entered the room; and cried, ‘No offence, I hope, madam; my wife, it seems, did not know you. She thought the captain had a mind for a bit of flesh by the bye. But I have quieted all matters: for I know you very well; I have seen that handsome face many a time, when I have been waiting upon the captain formerly. No offence, I hope, madam; but if my wife was as handsome as you are — I should not look for worse goods abroad.’

Booth conceived some displeasure at this speech; but he did not think proper to express more than a pish. — And then asked the bailiff what was the meaning of the noise they heard just now.

‘I know of no noise,’ answered the bailiff. ‘Some of my men have been carrying a piece of bad luggage up stairs; a poor rascal that resisted the law and justice; so I gave him a cut or two with a hanger. If they shall prove mortal, he must thank himself

‘self for it. If a man will not behave like a gentleman to an officer, he must take the consequence; but I must say that for you, captain, you behave yourself like a gentleman; and therefore I shall always use you as such; and I hope you will find bail soon with all my heart. This is but a paultry sum to what the last was; and I do assure you, there is nothing else against you in the office.’

The latter part of the bailiff’s speech somewhat comforted Amelia, who had been a little frightened by the former; and she soon after took leave of her husband, to go in quest of the doctor, who, as Amelia had heard that morning, was expected in town that very day, which was somewhat sooner than he had intended at his departure.

Before she went, however, she left a strict charge with the bailiff, who ushered her very civilly down stairs, that if one Colonel James came there to enquire for her husband, he should deny that he was there.

She then departed; and the bailiff immediately gave a very strict charge to his wife, his maid, and his followers, that if one Colonel James, or any one from him, should enquire after the captain, they should let him know he had the captain above stairs: for he doubted not but that the colonel was one of Booth’s creditors; and he hoped for a second bail bond by his means.

C H A P. III.

Containing matter pertinent to the history.

A M E L I A, in her way to the doctor’s, determined just to stop at her own lodgings, which lay a little out of the road, and to pay a momentary visit to her children.

This was fortunate enough; for had she called at the doctor’s house, she would have heard nothing of him, which would have caused in her some alarm and disappointment; for the doctor was set down at Mrs. Atkinson’s, where he was directed to Amelia’s lodgings, to which he went before he called at his own;

and here Amelia now found him playing with her two children.

The doctor had been a little surprised at not finding Amelia at home, nor any one that could give an account of her. He was now more surprised to see her come in such a dress, and at the disorder which he very plainly perceived in her pale and melancholy countenance. He addressed her first (for, indeed, he was in no great haste to speak) and cried ‘ My dear child, what is the matter? where is your husband? some mischief, I am afraid, hath happened to him in my absence.’

‘ Oh, my dear doctor,’ answered Amelia, ‘ sure some good angel hath sent you hither. My poor Will is arrested again. I left him in the most miserable condition in the very house whence your goodness formerly redeemed him.’

‘ Arrested!’ cries the doctor. ‘ Then it must be for some very inconsiderable trifle.’

‘ I wish it was,’ said Amelia; ‘ but it is for no less than fifty pound.’

‘ Then,’ cries the doctor, ‘ he hath been disingenuous with me. He told me, he did not owe ten pounds in the world for which he was liable to be sued.’

‘ I know not what to say,’ cries Amelia. ‘ Indeed, I am afraid to tell you the truth.’

‘ How! child,’ said the doctor — ‘ I hope you will never disguise it to any one, especially to me. Any prevarication, I promise you, will forfeit my friendship for ever.’

‘ I will tell you the whole,’ cries Amelia, ‘ and rely entirely on your goodness.’ She then related the gaming story, not forgetting to set in the fullest light, and to lay the strongest emphasis on, his promise never to play again.

The doctor fetched a deep sigh when he had heard Amelia’s relation, and cried, ‘ I am sorry, child, for the share you are to partake in your husband’s sufferings! but as for him, I really think he deserves no compassion. You say, he hath promised never to play again; but I must tell you he hath broke his promise to me already: for I had heard he was formerly ad-
dicted

dicted to this vice, and had given him sufficient caution against it. You will consider, child, I am already pretty largely engaged for him, every farthing of which, I am sensible, I must pay. You know I would go to the utmost verge of prudence to serve you; but I must not exceed my ability, which is not very great; and I have several families on my hands, who are by misfortune alone brought to want. I do assure you, I cannot at present answer for such a sum as this, without distressing my own circumstances.'

'Then Heaven have mercy upon us all,' cries Amelia; 'for we have no other friend on earth—My husband is undone; and these poor little wretches must be starved.'

The doctor cast his eyes on the children, and then cried—'I hope not so. I told you I must distress my circumstances, and I will distress them this once on your account, and on the account of these poor little babes—But things must not go on any longer in this way—You must take an heroic resolution. I will hire a coach for you to-morrow morning, which shall carry you all down to my parsonage-house. There you shall have my protection, till something can be done for your husband; of which, to be plain with you, I at present see no likelihood.'

Amelia fell upon her knees in an ecstasy of thanksgiving to the doctor, who immediately raised her up and placed her in her chair. She then recollected herself and said—'Oh! my worthy friend, I have still another matter to mention to you, in which I must have both your advice and assistance. My soul blushes to give you all this trouble; but what other friend have I?—indeed, what other friend could I apply to so properly on such an occasion?'

The doctor, with a very kind voice and countenance, desired her to speak. She then said—'Oh! sir, that wicked colonel, whom I have mentioned to you formerly, hath picked some quarrel with my husband (for she did not think proper to mention the cause), and hath sent him a challenge. It came to my hand

‘ last night, after he was arrested ; I opened and read it.’

‘ Give it me child,’ said the doctor.

She answered she had burnt it ; as was indeed true. ‘ But I remember it was an appointment to meet at sword and pistol this morning at Hyde-Park.’

‘ Make yourself easy, my dear child,’ cries the doctor, ‘ I will take care to prevent any mischief.’

‘ But consider, my dear sir,’ said she, ‘ this is a tender matter. My husband’s honour is to be preserved as well as his life.’

‘ And so is his soul, which ought to be the dearest of all things,’ cries the doctor. ‘ Honour ! nonsense. Can honour dictate to him to disobey the express commands of his Maker, in compliance with a custom established by a set of blockheads, founded on false principles of virtue, in direct opposition to the plain and positive precepts of religion, and tending manifestly to give a sanction to ruffians, and protect them in all the ways of impudence and villainy ?’

‘ All this, I believe, is very true,’ cries Amelia ; ‘ but yet you know, doctor, the opinion of the world.’

‘ You talk simply, child,’ cries the doctor. ‘ What is the opinion of the world, opposed to religion and virtue ? but you are in the wrong. It is not the opinion of the world ; it is the opinion of the idle, ignorant, and profligate. It is impossible it should be the opinion of one man of sense, who is in earnest in his belief of our religion. Chiefly indeed it hath been upheld by the nonsense of women, who, either from their extreme cowardice, and desire of protection, or, as Mr. Bayle thinks, from their excessive vanity, have been always forward to countenance a set of hectors and bravoës, and to despise all men of modesty and sobriety ; though these are often, at the bottom, not only the better, but the braver men.’

‘ You know, doctor,’ cries Amelia, ‘ I have never presumed to argue with you ; your opinion is to me always instruction, and your word a law.’

‘ Indeed, child,’ cries the doctor, ‘ I know you are a good woman ; and yet I must observe to you, that
‘ this

‘ this very desire of feeding the passion of female vanity with the heroism of her man, old Homer seems to make the characteristic of a bad and loose woman. He introduces Helen upbraiding her gallant with having quitted the fight, and left the victory to Menelaus, and seeming to be sorry that she had left her husband, only because he was the better duellist of the two; but in how different a light doth he represent the tender and chaste love of Andromache to her worthy Hector! she dissuades him from exposing himself to danger, even in a just cause. This is indeed a weakness; but it is an amiable one, and becoming the true feminine character; but a woman, who out of heroic vanity (for so it is) would hazard not only the life, but the soul too of her husband in a duel, is a monster, and ought to be painted in no other character than that of a Fury.’

‘ I assure you, doctor,’ cries Amelia, ‘ I never saw this matter in the odious light, in which you have truly represented it, before. I am ashamed to recollect what I have formerly said on this subject.— And yet whilst the opinion of the world is as it is, one would wish to comply as far as possible—especially as my husband is an officer of the army. If it can be done therefore with safety to his honour——’

‘ Again honour!’ cries the doctor. ‘ Indeed I will not suffer that noble word to be so basely and barbarously prostituted. I have known some of these men of honour, as they call themselves, to be the most arrant rascals in the universe.’

‘ Well, I ask your pardon,’ said she.—‘ Reputation then, if you please—or any other word you like better—you know my meaning very well.’

‘ I do know your meaning,’ cries the doctor, ‘ and Virgil knew it a great while ago. The next time you see your friend Mrs. Atkinson, ask her what it was made Dido fall in love with Æneas.’

‘ Nay, dear sir,’ said Amelia, ‘ do not rally me so unmercifully; think where my poor husband is now.’

‘He is,’ answered the doctor, ‘where I will presently be with him. In the mean time, do you pack up every thing in order for your journey to-morrow; for, if you are wise, you will not trust your husband a day longer in this town—therefore to packing—’

Amelia promised she would — though indeed she wanted not any warning for her journey on this account; for when she packed up herself in the coach, she packed up her all. However, she did not think proper to mention this to the doctor; for as he was now in pretty good humour, she did not care to venture again discomposing his temper.

The doctor then set out for Gray’s-Inn Lane; and, as soon as he was gone, Amelia began to consider of her incapacity to take a journey in her present situation, without even a clean shift. At last she resolved, as she was possessed of seven guineas and a half, to go to her friend and redeem some of her own and her husband’s linen out of captivity: indeed just so much, as would render it barely possible for them to go out of town with any kind of decency. And this resolution she immediately executed.

As soon as she had finished her business with the pawnbroker (if a man who lends under thirty per cent. deserves that name) he said to her, ‘Pray, madam, did you know that man who was here yesterday, when you brought the picture?’ Amelia answered in the negative. ‘Indeed, madam,’ said the broker, ‘he knows you, though he did not recollect you while you was here, as your hood was drawn over your face; but the moment you was gone, he begged to look at the picture, which I, thinking no harm, permitted. He had scarce looked upon it, when he cried out—“By heaven and earth, it is her picture!” He then asked me if I knew you—Indeed, says I, I never saw the lady before.’

In this last particular, however, the pawnbroker a little favoured of his profession, and made a small deviation from the truth: for when the man had asked him if he knew the lady, he answered she was some poor undone woman, who had pawned all her cloaths

to him the day before; and I suppose, says he, this picture is the last of her goods and chattels. This hint we thought proper to give the reader, as it may chance to be material.

Amelia answered coldly, that she had taken so very little notice of the man, that she scarce remembered he was there.

‘I assure you, madam,’ says the pawnbroker, ‘he hath taken very great notice of you; for the man changed countenance upon what I said, and presently after begged me to give him a dram. Oho! thinks I to myself, are you thereabouts? I would not be so much in love with some folks, as some people are, for more interest than I shall ever make of a thousand pound.’

Amelia blushed, and said, with some peevishness, that she knew nothing of the man; but supposed he was some impertinent fellow or other.

‘Nay, madam,’ answered the pawnbroker, ‘I assure you he is not worthy your regard. He is a poor wretch, and I believe I am possessed of most of his moveables. However, I hope you are not offended; for, indeed, he said no harm; but he was very strangely disordered, that is the truth of it.’

Amelia was very desirous of putting an end to this conversation, and altogether as eager to return to her children; she therefore bundled up her things as fast as she could, and calling for a hackney-coach, directed the coachman to her lodgings, and bid him drive her home with all haste he could.

C H A P. IV.

In which Dr. Harrison visits Colonel James.

THE doctor, when he left Amelia, intended to go directly to Booth; but he presently changed his mind, and determined first to call on the colonel, as he thought it was proper to put an end to that matter, before he gave Booth his liberty.

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The doctor found the two colonels, James and Bath, together. They both received him very civilly; for James was a very well-bred man; and Bath always shewed a particular respect to the clergy, he being indeed a perfect good Christian, except in the articles of fighting and swearing.

Our divine sat some time without mentioning the subject of his errand, in hopes that Bath would go away; but when he found no likelihood of that (for indeed Bath was of the two much the most pleased with his company) he told James that he had something to say to him relating to Mr. Booth, which he believed he might speak before his brother.

‘Undoubtedly, sir,’ said James; ‘for there can be no secrets between us which my brother may not hear.’

‘I come then to you, sir,’ said the doctor, ‘from the most unhappy woman in the world, to whose afflictions you have very greatly and very cruelly added, by sending a challenge to her husband, which hath very luckily fallen into her hands; for had the man, for whom you designed it, received it, I am afraid you would not have seen me upon this occasion.’

‘If I writ such a letter to Mr. Booth, sir,’ said James, ‘you may be assured I did not expect this visit in answer to it.’

‘I do not think you did,’ cries the doctor; ‘but you have great reason to thank Heaven for ordering this matter contrary to your expectations. I know not what trifle may have drawn this challenge from you; but, after what I have some reason to know of you, sir, I must plainly tell you, that, if you had added to your guilt already committed against this man that of having his blood upon your hands, your soul would have become as black as hell itself.’

‘Give me leave to say,’ cries the colonel, ‘this is a language which I am not used to hear; and if your cloth was not your protection, you should not give it me with impunity. After what you know of me, sir! What do you presume to know of me to my disadvantage?’

‘You say my cloth is my protection, colonel,’ answered the doctor, ‘therefore pray lay aside your anger;

ger ; I do not come with any design of affronting or offending you.—’

‘ Very well,’ cries Bath, ‘ that declaration is sufficient from a clergyman, let him say what he pleases.’

‘ Indeed, sir,’ says the doctor, very mildly, ‘ I consult equally the good of you both, and, in a spiritual sense, more especially yours ; for you know you have injured this poor man.’

‘ So far on the contrary,’ cries James, ‘ that I have been his greatest benefactor ; I scorn to upbraid him ; but you force me to it. Nor have I ever done him the least injury.’

‘ Perhaps not,’ said the doctor ; ‘ I will alter what I have said.—But for this I apply to your honour —Have you not intended him an injury, the very intention of which cancels every obligation ?’

‘ How, sir,’ answered the colonel—‘ What do you mean ?’

‘ My meaning,’ replied the doctor, ‘ is almost too tender to mention—Come, colonel, examine your own heart ; and then answer me on your honour, if you have not intended to do him the highest wrong which one man can do another.’

‘ I do not know what you mean by the question,’ answered the colonel.

‘ D—n me, the question is very transparent,’ cries Bath. ‘ From any other man it would be an affront with the strongest emphasis, but from one of the doctor’s cloth it demands a categorical answer.’

‘ I am not a papist, sir,’ answered Colonel James, ‘ nor am I obliged to confess to my priest. But if you have any thing to say, speak openly—for I do not understand your meaning.’

‘ I have explained my meaning to you already,’ said the doctor, ‘ in a letter I wrote to you on the subject—a subject which I am sorry I should have any occasion to write upon to a Christian.’

‘ I do remember now,’ cries the colonel, ‘ that I received a very impertinent letter, something like a sermon, against adultery ; but I did not expect to hear the author own it to my face.’

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‘ That brave man then, sir,’ answered the doctor, ‘ stands before you, who dares own he wrote that letter, and dares affirm too, that it was writ on a just and strong foundation. But if the hardness of your heart could prevail on you to treat my good intention with contempt and scorn, what, pray, could induce you to shew it, nay, to give it Mr. Booth? What motive could you have for that, unless you meant to insult him, and to provoke your rival to give you that opportunity of putting him out of the world, which you have since wickedly fought by your challenge?’

‘ I give him the letter!’ said the colonel.

‘ Yes, sir,’ answered the doctor, ‘ he shewed me the letter, and affirmed that you gave it him at the masquerade.’

‘ He is a lying rascal then,’ said the colonel, very passionately. ‘ I scarce took the trouble of reading the letter, and lost it out of my pocket.’

Here Bath interfered, and explained this affair in the manner in which it happened, and with which the reader is already acquainted. He concluded by great eulogiums on the performance, and declared it was one of the most enthusiastic (meaning, perhaps, ecclesiastic) letters that ever was written. ‘ And d—n me,’ says he, ‘ if I do not respect the author with the utmost emphasis of thinking.’

The doctor now recollected what had passed with Booth, and perceived he had made a mistake of one colonel for another. This he presently acknowledged to Colonel James, and said that the mistake had been his, and not Booth’s.

Bath now collected all his gravity and dignity, as he called it, into his countenance, and addressing himself to James, said — ‘ And was that letter writ to you, brother? — I hope you never deserved any suspicion of this kind.’

‘ Brother,’ cries James, ‘ I am accountable to myself for my actions, and shall not render an account either to you or that gentleman.’

‘ As to me, brother,’ answered Bath, ‘ you say right; but I think this gentleman may call you to
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‘an account; nay, I think it is his duty so to do. And let me tell you, brother, there is one much greater than he to whom you must give an account. Mrs. Booth is really a fine woman, a lady of most imperious and majestic presence. I have heard you often say, that you liked her; and if you have quarrelled with her husband upon this account, by all the dignity of man, I think you ought to ask his pardon.’

‘Indeed, brother,’ cries James, ‘I can bear this no longer—you will make me angry presently.’

‘Angry! brother James,’ cries Bath—‘angry!—I love you, brother, and have obligations to you. I will say no more—but I hope you know I do not fear making any man angry.’

James answered he knew it well; and then the doctor apprehending that while he was stopping up one breach, he should make another, presently interfered, and turned the discourse back to Booth.

‘You tell me, sir,’ said he to James, ‘that my gown is my protection; let it then at least protect me where I have had no design in offending; where I have consulted your highest welfare, as in truth I did in writing this letter. And if you did not in the least deserve any such suspicion, still you have no cause for resentment. Caution against sin, even to the innocent, can never be unwholesome. But this I assure you, whatever anger you have to me, you can have none to poor Booth, who was entirely ignorant of my writing to you, and who, I am certain, never entertained the least suspicion of you; on the contrary, reveres you with the highest esteem, and love, and gratitude. Let me therefore reconcile all matters between you, and bring you together before he hath even heard of this challenge.’

‘Brother,’ cries Bath, ‘I hope I shall not make you angry—I lie when I say so; for I am indifferent to any man’s anger—Let me be an accessory to what the doctor hath said. I think I may be trusted with matters of this nature; and it is a little unkind that, if you intended to send a challenge, you did
‘not

‘ not make me the bearer. But, indeed, as to what appears to me, this matter may be very well made up; and as Mr. Booth doth not know of the challenge, I don’t see why he ever should, any more than your giving him the lie just now; but that he shall never have from me, nor, I believe, from this gentleman; for, indeed, if he should, it would be incumbent upon him to cut your throat.’

‘ Lookee, doctor,’ said James, ‘ I do not deserve the unkind suspicion you just now threw out against me. I never thirsted after any man’s blood; and as for what hath passed, since this discovery hath happened, I may perhaps not think it worth my while to trouble myself any more about it.’

The doctor was not contented with ‘ perhaps;’ he insisted on a firm promise, to be bound with the colonel’s honour. This at length he obtained, and then departed well satisfied.

In fact, the colonel was ashamed to avow the real cause of the quarrel to this good man, or, indeed, to his brother Bath, who would not only have condemned him equally with the doctor, but would possibly have quarrelled with him on his sister’s account, whom, as the reader must have observed, he loved above all things; and, in plain truth, though the colonel was a brave man, and dared to fight, yet he was altogether as willing to let it alone; and this made him now and then give a little way to the wrongheadedness of colonel Bath, who, with all the other principles of honour and humanity, made no more of cutting the throat of a man upon any of his punctilio’s, than a butcher doth of killing sheep.

C H A P. V.

What passed at the bailiff’s house.

THE doctor now set forwards to his friend Booth, and as he past by the door of his attorney in the way, he called upon him, and took him with him.

The meeting between him and Booth need not be expatiated on. The doctor was really angry, and though he deferred his lecture to a more proper opportunity, yet,

yet, as he was no dissembler (indeed, he was incapable of any disguise), he could not put on a shew of that heartiness with which he had formerly used to receive his friend.

Booth at last began himself in the following manner: 'Doctor, I am really ashamed to see you; and if you knew the confusion of my soul on this occasion, I am sure you would pity rather than upbraid me—And yet I can say with great sincerity, I rejoice in this last instance of my shame, since I am like to reap the most solid advantage from it.' The doctor stared at this, and Booth thus proceeded: 'Since I have been in this wretched place, I have employed my time almost entirely in reading over a series of sermons, which are contained in that book,' (meaning Dr. Barrow's works, which then lay on the table before him), 'in proof of the Christian religion, and so good an effect have they had upon me, that I shall, I believe, be the better man for them as long as I live. I have not a doubt (for I own I have had such), which remains now unsatisfied.—If ever an angel might be thought to guide the pen of a writer, surely the pen of that great and good man had such an assistant.' The doctor readily concurred in the praises of Dr. Barrow, and added—'You say you have had your doubts, young gentleman; indeed, I did not know that—And pray, what were your doubts?' 'Whatever they were, sir,' said Booth, 'they are now satisfied, as I believe those of every impartial and sensible reader will be, if he will, with due attention, read over these excellent sermons.' 'Very well,' answered the doctor, 'though I have conversed, I find, with a false brother hitherto, I am glad you are reconciled to truth at last, and I hope your future faith will have some influence on your future life.' 'I need not tell you, sir,' replied Booth, 'that will always be the case, where faith is sincere, as I assure you mine is. Indeed, I never was a rash disbeliever; my chief doubt was founded on this, that as men appeared to me to act entirely from their passions, their actions could have neither merit nor demerit.' 'A very worthy conclusion truly,' cries

cries the doctor ; ‘ but if men act, as I believe they do, from their passions, it would be fair to conclude that religion to be true, which applies immediately to the strongest of these passions, hope and fear, chusing rather to rely on its rewards and punishments, than on that native beauty of virtue which some of the antient philosophers thought proper to recommend to their disciples. — But we will defer this discourse till another opportunity ; at present, as the devil hath thought proper to set you free, I will try if I can prevail on the bailiff to do the same.’

The doctor had really not so much money in town as Booth’s debt amounted to, and therefore, though he would otherwise very willingly have paid it, he was forced to give bail to the action. For which purpose, as the bailiff was a man of great form, he was obliged to get another person to be bound with him. This person, however, the attorney undertook to procure, and immediately set out in quest of him.

During his absence, the bailiff came into the room, and addressing himself to the doctor, said, ‘ I think, sir, your name is Dr. Harrison.’ The doctor immediately acknowledged his name. Indeed, the bailiff had seen it to a bail-bond before. ‘ Why then, sir,’ said the bailiff, ‘ there is a man above in a dying condition, that desires the favour of speaking to you ; I believe he wants you to pray by him.’

The bailiff himself was not more ready to execute his office on all occasions for his fee than the doctor was to execute his for nothing. Without making any further enquiry therefore into the condition of the man, he immediately went up stairs.

As soon as the bailiff returned down stairs, which was immediately after he had lodged the doctor in the room, Booth had the curiosity to ask him who this man was. ‘ Why, I don’t know much of him,’ said the bailiff. ‘ I had him once in custody before now ; I remember, it was when your honour was here last ; and now I remember too, he said, then, he knew your honour very well. Indeed, I had some opinion of him at that time ; for he spent his money very much like a gentleman ; but I have discovered

‘discovered since, that he is a poor fellow, and worth nothing. He is a mere shy cock. I have had the stuff about me this week, and could never get at him till this morning; nay, I don’t believe we should ever have found out his lodgings, had it not been for the attorney that was here just now, who gave us information. And so we took him this morning by a comical way enough. For we dressed up one of my men in women’s cloaths, who told the people of the house, that he was his sister just come to town: for we were told by the attorney, that he had such a sister, upon which he was let up stairs; and so kept the door a-jar till I and another rushed in. Let me tell you, captain, there are as good strata-gems made use of in our business as any in the army. ‘But pray, sir,’ said Booth, ‘did not you tell me this morning that the poor fellow was desperately wounded; nay, I think you told the doctor that he was a dying man?’

‘I had like to have forgot that,’ cries the bailiff. — ‘Nothing would serve the gentleman but that he must make resistance, and he gave my man a blow with a stick; but I soon quieted him, by giving him a wipe or two with a hanger. Not that I believe I have done his business neither; but the fellow is faint-hearted, and the surgeon, I fancy, frightens him more than he need. — But however, let the worst come to the worst, the law is all on my side, and it is only *se fendendo*. The attorney that was here just now told me so, and bid me fear nothing: for that he would stand my friend, and undertake the cause; and he is a devilish good one at a defence at the Old-Bailey, I promise you. I have known him bring off several that every body thought would have been hanged.’

‘But suppose you should be acquitted,’ said Booth; ‘would not the blood of this poor wretch lie a little heavy at your heart?’

‘Why should it, captain?’ said the bailiff. ‘Is it not all done in a lawful way? why will people resist the law when they know the consequence? To be sure, if a man was to kill another in an unlawful manner as it were, and what the law calls murder, that

‘ that is quite and clear another thing. I should not care to be convicted of murder any more than another man. Why now, captain, you have been abroad in the wars, they tell me, and to be sure must have killed men in your time. Pray, was you ever afraid afterwards of seeing their ghosts ?’

‘ That is a different affair,’ cries Booth ; ‘ but I would not kill a man in cold blood for all the world.

‘ There is no difference at all, as I can see,’ cries the bailiff. ‘ One is as much in the way of business as the other. When gentlemen behave themselves like unto gentlemen, I know how to treat them as such as well as any officer the king hath.——And when they do not, why they must take what follows, and the law doth not call it murder.’

Booth very plainly saw the bailiff had squared his conscience exactly according to law, and that he could not easily subvert his way of thinking. He therefore gave up the cause, and desired the bailiff to expedite the bonds, which he promised to do, saying, he hoped he had used him with proper civility this time, if he had not the last, and that he should be remembered for it.

But before we close this chapter, we shall endeavour to satisfy an enquiry which may arise in our most favourite readers (for so are the most curious) how it came to pass that such a person as was Dr. Harrison should employ such a fellow as this Murphy.

The case then was thus. This Murphy had been clerk to an attorney in the very same town in which the doctor lived, and when he was out of his time, had set up with a character fair enough, and had married a maid servant of Mrs. Harris, by which means he had all the business to which that lady and her friends, in which number was the doctor, could commend him.

Murphy went on with his business, and thrived very well, till he happened to make an unfortunate slip, in which he was detected by a brother of the same calling. But though we call this by the gentle name of a slip, in respect to its being so extremely common, it was a matter in which the law, if it had ever come to

its ears, would have passed a very severe censure, being, indeed, no less than perjury and subornation of perjury.

This brother attorney being a very good-natured man, and unwilling to bespatter his own profession, and considering, perhaps, that the consequence did in no wise affect the public, who had no manner of interest in the alternative, whether A. in whom the right was, or B. to whom Mr. Murphy, by the means aforesaid, had transferred it, succeeded in an action. We mention this particular, because, as this brother attorney was a very violent party man, and a professed stickler for the public, to suffer any injury to have been done to that, would have been highly inconsistent with his principles.

This gentleman, therefore, came to Mr. Murphy, and after shewing him that he had it in his power to convict him of the aforesaid crime, very generously told him that he had not the least delight in bringing any man to destruction, nor the least animosity against him. All that he insisted upon, was, that he would not live in the same town or country with one who had been guilty of such an action. He then told Mr. Murphy that he would keep the secret on two conditions; the one was, that he immediately quitted that country; the other was, that he should convince him he deserv'd this kindness by his gratitude, and that Murphy should transfer to the other all the business which he then had in those parts, and to which he could possibly recommend him.

It is the observation of a very wise man, that it is a very common exercise of wisdom in this world, of two evils to chuse the least. The reader therefore cannot doubt but that Mr. Murphy complied with the alternative propos'd by his kind brother, and accepted the terms on which secrecy was to be obtained.

This happened while the doctor was abroad; and with all this, except the departure of Mr. Murphy, not only the doctor, but the whole town (save his aforesaid brother alone) were to this day unacquainted.

The

The doctor, at his return, hearing that Mr. Murphy was gone, applied to the other attorney in his affairs, who still employed this Murphy as his agent in town, partly perhaps out of good-will to him, and partly from the recommendation of Miss Harris; for as he had married a servant of the family, and a particular favourite of her's, there can be no wonder that she, who was entirely ignorant of the affair above related, as well as of his conduct in town, should continue her favour to him. It will appear therefore, I apprehend, no longer strange, that the doctor, who had seen this man but three times since his removal to town, and then conversed with him only on business, should remain as ignorant of his life and character, as a man generally is of the character of the hackney-coachman who drives him. Nor doth it reflect more on the honour or understanding of the doctor under these circumstances to employ Murphy, than it would if he had been driven about the town by a thief or a murderer.

C H A P. VI.

What passed between the doctor and the sick man.

WE left the doctor in the last chapter with the wounded man, to whom the doctor, in a very gentle voice, spoke as follows :

‘ I am sorry, friend, to see you in this situation, and am very ready to give you any comfort or assistance within my power.’

‘ I thank you kindly, doctor,’ said the man. ‘ Indeed, I should not have presumed to have sent to you, had I not known your character : for though I believe I am not at all known to you, I have lived many years in that town where you yourself had a house : my name is Robinson. I used to write for the attorneys in those parts, and I have been employed on your business in my time.’

‘ I do not recollect you, nor your name,’ said the doctor ; ‘ but consider, friend, your moments are precious, and your business, as I am informed, is
‘ to

‘to offer up your prayers to that great being, before whom you are shortly to appear.—But first, let me exhort you earnestly to a most serious repentance of all your sins.’

‘Oh! doctor,’ said the man—‘Pray, what is your opinion of a death-bed repentance?’

‘If repentance is sincere,’ cries the doctor, ‘I hope, through the mercies and merits of our most powerful and benign intercessor, it will never come too late.’

‘But do you not think, sir,’ cries the man, ‘that, in order to obtain forgiveness of any great sin we have committed by an injury done to our neighbours, it is necessary, as far as in us lies, to make all the amends we can to the party injured, and to undo, if possible, the injury we have done.’

‘Most undoubtedly,’ cried the doctor; ‘our pretence to repentance would otherwise be gross hypocrisy, and an impudent attempt to deceive and impose upon our Creator himself.’

‘Indeed, I am of the same opinion,’ cries the penitent; ‘and I think further, that this is thrown in my way, and hinted to me by that Great Being; for an accident happened to me yesterday, by which, as things have fallen out since, I think I plainly discern the hand of Providence. I went yesterday, sir, you must know, to a pawnbroker’s, to pawn the last moveable, which, except the poor cloaths you see on my back, I am worth in the world. While I was there, a young lady came in, to pawn her picture. She had disguised herself so much, and pulled her hood so over her face, that I did not know her while she staid, which was scarce three minutes. As soon as she was gone, the pawnbroker, taking the picture in his hand, cried out—*Upon my word, this is the handsomest face I ever saw in my life.* I desired him to let me look on the picture, which he readily did—and I no sooner cast my eyes upon it, than the strong resemblance struck me, and I knew it to be Mrs. Booth.’

‘Mrs. Booth! what Mrs. Booth?’ cries the doctor.

‘ Captain Booth’s lady, the captain who is now below,’ said the other.

‘ How!’ cries the doctor with great impetuosity.

‘ Have patience,’ said the man, ‘ and you shall hear all. I expressed some surprise to the pawnbroker, and asked the lady’s name. He answered that he knew not her name, but that she was some undone wretch, who had the day before left all her cloaths with him in pawn. My guilt immediately flew in my face, and told me I had been accessory to this lady’s undoing. The sudden shock so affected me, that, had it not been for a dram which the pawnbroker gave me, I believe I should have sunk on the spot.’

‘ Accessory to her undoing! how accessory?’ said the doctor. ‘ Pray tell me; for I am impatient to hear.’

‘ I will tell you all, as fast as I can,’ cries the sick man. ‘ You know, good doctor, that Mrs. Harris of our town had two daughters, this Mrs. Booth and another. Now, sir, it seems the other daughter had, some way or other, disobliged her mother, a little before the old lady died, therefore she made a will, and left all her fortune, except one thousand pounds, to Mrs. Booth; to which will, Mr. Murphy, myself, and another, who is now dead, were the witnesses. Mrs. Harris afterwards died suddenly; upon which it was contrived, by her other daughter and Mr. Murphy, to make a new will, in which Mrs. Booth had a legacy of ten pounds, and all the rest was given to the other. To this will, Murphy, myself, and the same third person, again set our hands.’

‘ Good Heaven! how wonderful is thy providence,’ cries the doctor — ‘ Murphy! say you?’

‘ He himself, sir,’ answered Robinson; ‘ Murphy, who is the greatest rogue, I believe, now in the world.’

‘ Pray, sir, proceed,’ cries the doctor.

‘ For this service, sir,’ said Robinson, ‘ myself and the third person, one Carter, received two hundred pounds each. What reward Murphy himself had, I know

‘know not. Carter died soon afterwards; and from that time, at several payments, I have by threats extorted above a hundred pound more.—And this, sir, is the whole truth, which I am ready to testify, if it would please heaven to prolong my life.’

‘I hope it will,’ cries the doctor; ‘but something must be done, for fear of accidents—I will send to counsel immediately, to know how to secure your testimony.—Whom can I get to send?—Stay, ay—he will do—but I know not where his house or his chambers are—I will go myself—but I may be wanted here.’

While the doctor was in this violent agitation, the surgeon made his appearance. The doctor stood still in a meditating posture, while the surgeon examined his patient. After which, the doctor begged him to declare his opinion, and whether he thought the wounded man in any immediate danger of death. ‘I do not know,’ answered the surgeon, ‘what you call immediate. He may live several days——nay, he may recover. It is impossible to give any certain opinion in these cases.’ He then launched forth into a set of terms, which the doctor, with all his scholarship, could not understand. To say the truth, many of them were not to be found in any dictionary or lexicon.

One discovery however the doctor made; and that was, that the surgeon was a very ignorant, conceited fellow, and knew nothing of his profession. He resolved therefore to get better advice for the sick; but this he postponed at present, and applying himself to the surgeon, said he should be very much obliged to him, if he knew where to find such a counsellor, and would fetch him thither. ‘I should not ask such a favour of you, sir,’ says the doctor, ‘if it was not on business of the last importance, or if I could find any other messenger.’

‘I fetch—sir!’ said the surgeon, very angrily, ‘Do you take me for a footman, or a porter? I don’t know who you are; but I believe you are full as proper to go on such an errand as I am,’ (for as the doctor, who was just come off

his journey, was very roughly dressed, the surgeon held him in no great respect). The surgeon then called aloud from the top of the stairs, 'Let my coachman draw up,' and strutted off without any ceremony, telling his patient he would call again the next day.

At this very instant arrived Murphy with the other bail, and finding Booth alone, he asked the bailiff at the door, what was become of the doctor, 'Why the doctor,' answered he, 'is above stairs, praying with ———' 'How!' cries Murphy, 'How came you not to carry him directly to Newgate, as you promised me?' 'Why, because he was wounded,' cries the bailiff. 'I thought it was charity to take care of him; and besides, why should one make more noise about the matter than is necessary?' 'And Dr. Harrison with him?' said Murphy. 'Yes, he is,' said the bailiff; 'he desired to speak with the doctor very much, and they have been praying together almost this hour.'——'All is up, and undone,' cries Murphy. 'Let me come by, I have thought of something which I must do immediately.'

Now as by means of the surgeon's leaving the door open, the doctor heard Murphy's voice naming Robinson peevishly, he drew softly to the top of the stairs, where he heard the foregoing dialogue; and as soon as Murphy had uttered his last words, and was moving downwards, the doctor immediately sallied from his post, running as fast as he could, and crying, 'stop the villain, stop the thief.'

The attorney wanted no better hint to accelerate his pace; and having the start of the doctor, got down stairs, and out into the street; but the doctor was so close at his heels, and being in foot the nimbler of the two, he soon overtook him, and laid hold of him, as he would have done on either Broughton or Slack in the same cause.

This action in the street, accompanied with the frequent cry of, stop thief, by the doctor, during the chase, presently drew together a large mob, who began, as is usual, to enter immediately upon business, and to make
strict

strict enquiry into the matter, in order to proceed to justice in their summary way.

Murphy, who knew well the temper of the mob, cried out, 'If you are a bailiff, shew me your writ. Gentlemen, he pretends to arrest me here without a writ.'

Upon this, one of the sturdiest and forwardest of the mob, and who, by a superior strength of body and of lungs, presided in this assembly, declared he would suffer no such thing. 'D—n me,' says he, 'away to the pump with the catchpole directly—shew me your writ, or let the gentleman go—you shall not arrest a man contrary to law.'

He then laid his hands on the doctor, who still fast gripping the attorney, cried out: 'He is a villain—I am no bailiff, but a clergyman; and this lawyer is guilty of forgery, and hath ruined a poor family.'

'How!' cries the spokesman——'a lawyer!——that alters the case—'

'Yes, faith,' cries another of the mob, 'it is lawyer Murphy. I know him very well.'

'And hath he ruined a poor family? like enough, faith, if he's a lawyer—Away with him to the justice immediately.'

The bailiff now came up, desiring to know what was the matter; to whom doctor Harrison answered, that he had arrested that villain for forgery. 'How can you arrest him,' cries the bailiff, 'you are no officer, nor have any warrant? Mr. Murphy is a gentleman, and he shall be used as such.'

'Nay, to be sure,' cries the spokesman, 'there ought to be a warrant; that's the truth on't.'

'There needs no warrant,' cries the doctor. 'I accuse him of felony; and I know so much of the law of England, that any man may arrest a felon without any warrant whatever. This villain hath undone a poor family; and I will die on the spot before I part with him.'

'If the law be so,' cries the orator, 'that is another matter. And to be sure, to ruin a poor man is the greatest of sins. And being a lawyer too, makes it so much the worse—He shall go before the justice,

‘d—n me if he shan’t go before the justice. I say the word, he shall.’

‘I say he is a gentleman, and shall be used according to law,’ cries the bailiff. ‘And though you are a clergyman,’ said he to Harrison, ‘you don’t shew yourself as one by your actions.’

‘That’s a bailiff,’ cries one of the mob—‘one lawyer will always stand by another; but I think the clergyman is a very good man, and acts becoming a clergyman to stand by the poor.’

At which words the mob all gave a great shout, and several cried out: ‘Bring him along; away with him to the justice.’

And now a constable appeared, and with an authoritative voice declared what he was, produced his staff, and demanded the peace.

The doctor then delivered his prisoner over to the officer, and charged him with felony; the constable received him; the attorney submitted; the bailiff was hushed; and the waves of the mob immediately subsided.

The doctor now balanced with himself how he should proceed; at last he determined to leave Booth a little longer in captivity, and not quit sight of Murphy, before he had lodged him safe with a magistrate. They then all moved forwards to the justice; the constable and his prisoner marching first, the doctor and the bailiff following next, and about five thousand mob (for no less number were assembled in a very few minutes) following in the procession.

They found the magistrate just sitting down to his dinner; however, when he was acquainted with the doctor’s profession, he immediately admitted him, and heard his business. Which he no sooner perfectly understood, with all its circumstances, than he resolved, though it was then very late, and he had been fatigued all the morning with public business, to postpone all refreshment till he had discharged his duty. He accordingly adjourned the prisoner and his cause to the bailiff’s house, whither he himself with the doctor immediately repaired, and whither the attorney was fol-

lowed

lowed by a much larger number of attendants than he had been honoured with before.

C H A P. VII.

In which the history draws towards a conclusion.

NOTHING could exceed the astonishment of Booth at the behaviour of the doctor, at the time when he sallied forth in pursuit of the attorney; for which it was so impossible for him to account in any manner whatever. He remained a long time in the utmost torture of mind, till at last the bailiff's wife came to him, and asked him if the doctor was not a mad-man; and in truth he could hardly defend him from that imputation.

While he was in this perplexity, the maid of the house brought him a message from Robinson, desiring the favour of seeing him above stairs. With this he immediately complied.

When these two were alone together, and the key turned on them (for the bailiff's wife was a most careful person, and never omitted that ceremony in the absence of her husband, having always at her tongue's end that excellent proverb of 'safe bind, safe find.')

Robinson looking stedfastly upon Booth, said, 'I believe, sir, you scarce remember me.'

Booth answered, that he thought he had seen his face somewhere before; but could not then recollect when or where.

'Indeed, sir,' answered the man, 'it was a place which no man can remember with pleasure. But do you not remember, a few weeks ago, that you had the misfortune to be in a certain prison in this town, where you lost a trifling sum at cards to a fellow prisoner?'

This hint sufficiently awakened Booth's memory, and he now recollected the features of his old friend Robinson. He answered him a little furlily, 'I know you now very well; but I did not imagine you would ever have reminded me of that transaction.'

‘ Alas, sir!’ answered Robinson, ‘ whatever happened then was very trifling, compared to the injuries I have done you: but if my life be spared long enough, I will now undo it all! and as I have been one of your worst enemies, I will now be one of your best friends.’

He was just entering upon his story, when a noise was heard below, which might be almost compared to what hath been heard in Holland, when the dykes have given way, and the ocean in an inundation breaks in upon the land. It seemed indeed as if the whole world was bursting into the house at once.

Booth was a man of great firmness of mind, and he had need of it all at this instant. As for poor Robinson, the usual concomitants of guilt attended him, and he began to tremble in a violent manner.

The first person who ascended the stairs was the doctor, who no sooner saw Booth than he ran to him and embraced him, crying, ‘ My child, I wish you joy with all my heart. Your sufferings are all at an end; and Providence hath done you the justice at last, which it will one day or other render to all men.—You will hear all presently; but I can now only tell you, that your sister is discovered, and the estate is your own.’

Booth was in such confusion, that he scarce made any answer; and now appeared the justice and his clerk, and immediately afterwards the constable with his prisoner, the bailiff, and as many more as could possibly crowd up stairs.

The doctor now addressed himself to the sick man, and desired him to repeat the same information before the justice which he had made already; to which Robinson readily consented.

While the clerk was taking down the information, the attorney expressed a very impatient desire to send instantly for his clerk; and expressed so much uneasiness at the confusion in which he had left his papers at home, that a thought suggested itself to the doctor, that, if his house was searched, some lights, and evidence, relating to this affair, would certainly be found;

found; he therefore desired the justice to grant a search-warrant immediately, to search his house.

The justice answered that he had no such power. That if there was any suspicion of stolen goods, he could grant a warrant to search for them.

‘How, sir!’ said the doctor, ‘can you grant a warrant to search a man’s house for a silver tea-spoon, and not in a case like this, where a man is robbed of his whole estate?’

‘Hold, sir!’ says the sick man, ‘I believe I can answer that point; for I can swear he hath several title deeds of the estate now in his possession, which I am sure were stolen from the right owner.’

The justice still hesitated. He said title deeds favoured of the reality, and it was not felony to steal them. If, indeed, they were taken away in a box, then it would be felony to steal the box.

‘Savour of the reality! savour of the fatality,’ said the doctor. ‘I never heard such incomprehensible nonsense. This is impudent, as well as childish, trifling with the lives and properties of men.’

‘Well, sir,’ said Robinson, ‘I now am sure I can do his business; for I know he hath a silver cup in his possession, which is the property of this gentleman (meaning Booth); and how he got it but by stealth, let him account if he can.’

‘That will do,’ cries the justice with great pleasure, ‘that will do; and if you will charge him on oath with that, I will instantly grant my warrant to search his house for it.’ ‘And I will go and see it executed,’ cries the doctor: for it was a maxim of his, that no man could descend below himself in doing any act which may contribute to protect an innocent person, or to bring a rogue to the gallows.

The oath was instantly taken, the warrant signed, and the doctor attended the constable in the execution of it.

The clerk then proceeded in taking the information of Robinson, and had just finished it, when the doctor returned with the utmost joy in his countenance, and declared that he had sufficient evidence of the fact in his possession. He had indeed two or three letters

from Miss Harris, in answer to the attorney's frequent demands of money for secrecy, that fully explained the whole villainy.

The justice now asked the prisoner what he had to say for himself, or whether he chose to say any thing in his own defence.

'Sir,' said the attorney with great confidence, 'I am not to defend myself here. It will be of no service to me; for I know you neither can nor will discharge me. But I am extremely innocent of all this matter, as I doubt not but to make appear to the satisfaction of a court of justice.'

The legal previous ceremonies were then gone through; binding over the prosecutor, &c. and then the attorney was committed to Newgate; whither he was escorted amidst the acclamations of the populace.

When Murphy was departed, and a little calm restored in the house, the justice made his compliments of congratulation to Booth; who, as well as he could in his present tumult of joy, returned his thanks to both the magistrate and the doctor. They were now all preparing to depart, when Mr. Bondum stepped up to Booth, and said: 'Hold, sir, you have forgot one thing—you have not given bail yet.'

This occasioned some distress at this time; for the attorney's friend was departed; but when the justice heard this, he immediately offered himself as the other bondsman; and thus ended the affair.

It was now past six o'clock, and none of the gentlemen had yet dined. They very readily therefore accepted the magistrate's invitation, and went all together to his house.

And now the very first thing that was done, even before they sat down to dinner, was to dispatch a messenger to one of the best surgeons in town, to take care of Robinson; and another messenger to Booth's lodgings, to prevent Amelia's concern at their staying so long.

The latter however was to little purpose; for Amelia's patience had been worn out before, and she had taken a hackney-coach, and driven to the bailiff's, where

where she arrived a little after the departure of her husband, and was thence directed to the justice's.

Though there was no kind of reason for Amelia's fright at hearing that her husband and doctor Harrison were gone before the justice; and though she indeed imagined that they were there in the light of complainants, not of offenders; yet so tender were her fears for her husband, and so much had her gentle spirits been lately agitated, that she had a thousand apprehensions of the knew not what. When she arrived therefore at the house, she ran directly into the room, where all the company were at dinner, scarce knowing what she did, or whither she was going.

She found her husband in such a situation, and discovered such a cheerfulness in his countenance, that so violent a turn was given to her spirits, that she was just able, with the assistance of a glass of water, to support herself. She soon however recovered her calmness, and in a little time began to eat what might indeed be almost called her breakfast.

The justice now wished her joy of what had happened that day; for which she kindly thanked him, apprehending he meant the liberty of her husband. His worship might perhaps have explained himself more largely, had not the doctor given him a timely wink; for this wise and good man was fearful of making such a discovery all at once to Amelia, lest it should overpower her; and luckily the justice's wife was not well enough acquainted with the matter to say any thing more on it than barely to assure the lady that she joined in her husband's congratulation.

Amelia was then in a clean white gown, which she had that day redeemed, and was, indeed, dressed all over with great neatness and exactness; with the glow therefore which arose in her features from finding her husband released from his captivity, she made so charming a figure, that she attracted the eyes of the magistrate and of his wife; and they both agreed, when they were alone, that they had never seen so charming a creature; nay, Booth himself afterwards told her that he scarce ever remembered her to look so extremely beautiful as she did that evening.

Whether Amelia's beauty, or the reflection on the remarkable act of justice he had performed, or whatever motive filled the magistrate with extraordinary good humour, and opened his heart and cellars, I will not determine; but he gave them so hearty a welcome, and they were all so pleased with each other, that Amelia, for that one night, trusted the care of her children to the woman where they lodged, nor did the company rise from table till the clock struck eleven.

They then separated. Amelia and Booth, having been set down at their lodgings, retired into each other's arms; nor did Booth that evening, by the doctor's advice, mention one word of the grand affair to his wife.

C H A P. VIII.

Thus this history draws nearer to a conclusion.

IN the morning early Amelia received the following letter from Mrs. Atkinson.

' The surgeon of the regiment, to which the captain my husband lately belonged, and who came this evening to see the captain, hath almost frightened me out of my wits, by a strange story of your husband being committed to prison by a justice of peace for forgery. For Heaven's sake, send me the truth. If my husband can be of any service, weak as he is, he will be carried in a chair to serve a brother officer, for whom he hath a regard, which I need not mention. Or if the sum of twenty pound will be of any service to you, I will wait upon you with it the moment I can get my cloaths on, the morning you receive this; for it is too late to send to-night. The captain begs his hearty service and respects; and believe me,

' Dear Madam,

' Your ever affectionate friend,

' and humble servant,

' F. Atkinson.'

When Amelia read this letter to Booth, they were both equally surprized, she at the commitment for forgery, and he at seeing such a letter from Mrs. Atkinson; for he was a stranger yet to the reconciliation that had happened.

Booth's doubts were first satisfied by Amelia, from which he received great pleasure; for he really had a very great affection and fondness for Mr. Atkinson, who, indeed, so well deserved it. 'Well, my dear,' said he to Amelia smiling, 'shall we accept this generous offer?'

'O fy! no certainly,' answered she.

'Why not,' cries Booth, 'it is but a trifle; and yet it will be of great service to us?'

'But consider, my dear,' said she, 'how ill these poor people can spare it.'

'They can spare it for a little while,' said Booth; 'and we shall soon pay it them again.'

'When, my dear?' said Amelia. 'Do, my dear Will, consider our wretched circumstances. I beg you let us go into the country immediately, and live upon bread and water, till fortune pleases to smile upon us.'

'I am convinced that day is not far off,' said Booth. 'However, give me leave to send an answer to Mrs. Atkinson, that we shall be glad of her company immediately to breakfast.'

'You know I never contradict you,' said she; 'but I assure you it is contrary to my inclinations to take this money.'

'Well, suffer me,' cries he, 'to act this once contrary to your inclinations.' He then writ a short note to Mrs. Atkinson, and dispatched it away immediately; which when he had done, Amelia said, 'I shall be glad of Mrs. Atkinson's company to breakfast; but yet I wish you would oblige me in refusing this money. Take five guineas only. That is indeed such a sum, as, if we never should pay it, would sit light on my mind. The last persons in the world from whom I would receive favours of that sort, are the poor and generous.'

'You

‘ You can receive favours only from the generous,’ cries Booth: ‘ and, to be plain with you, there are very few who are generous that are not poor.’

‘ What think you,’ said she, ‘ of Dr. Harrison?’

‘ I do assure you,’ said Booth, ‘ he is far from being rich. The doctor hath an income of little more than six hundred pounds a year; and I am convinced he gives away four of it. Indeed, he is one of the best oeconomists in the world; but yet I am positive he never was at any time possessed of five hundred pounds since he hath been a man. Consider, dear Emily, the late obligations we have to this gentleman; it would be unreasonable to expect more, at least at present; my half-pay is mortgaged for a year to come.—How then shall we live?’

‘ By our labour,’ answered she; ‘ I am able to labour, and I am sure I am not ashamed of it.’

‘ And do you really think you can support such a life?’

‘ I am sure I could be happy in it,’ answered Amelia. ‘ And why not I, as well as a thousand others, who have not the happiness of such a husband to make life delicious? why should I complain of my hard fate, while so many, who are much poorer than I, enjoy theirs. Am I of a superior rank of being to the wife of the honest labourer? am I not partaker of one common nature with her?’

‘ My angel,’ cries Booth, ‘ it delights me to hear you talk thus, and for a reason you little guess; for I am assured that one who can so heroically endure adversity, will bear prosperity with equal greatness of soul; for the mind that cannot be dejected by the former, is not likely to be transported with the latter.’

‘ If it had pleased Heaven,’ cried she, ‘ to have tried me, I think, at least I hope, I should have preferred my humility.’

‘ Then, my dear,’ said he, ‘ I will relate you a dream I had last night. You know, you lately mentioned a dream of yours.’

‘ Do so,’ said she, ‘ I am attentive.’

‘ I dreamt,’

‘ I dreamt,’ said he, ‘ this night, that we were in the most miserable situation imaginable. Indeed, in the situation we were yesterday morning, or rather worse; that I was laid in a prison for debt, and that you wanted a morsel of bread to feed the mouths of your hungry children. At length (for nothing you know is quicker than the transition in dreams) Dr. Harrison, methought, came to me, with chearfulness and joy in his countenance. The prison doors immediately flew open; and Dr. Harrison introduced you, gayly, though not richly, dressed. That you gently chid me for staying so long; all on a sudden appeared a coach with four horses to it, in which was a maid servant with our two children. We both immediately went into the coach, and taking our leave of the doctor, set out towards your country house: for yours I dreamt it was. — I only ask you now, if this was real, and the transition almost as sudden, could you support it?’—

Amelia was going to answer, when Mrs. Atkinson came into the room, and after very little previous ceremony presented Booth with a bank note, which he received of her, saying, he would very soon repay it: a promise that a little offended Amelia, as she thought he had no chance of keeping it.

The doctor presently arrived, and the company sat down to breakfast, during which Mrs. Atkinson entertained them with the history of the doctors that had attended her husband, by whose advice Atkinson was recovered from every thing but the weakness which his distemper had occasioned.

When the tea-table was removed, Booth told the doctor that he had acquainted his wife with a dream he had last night. ‘ I dreamt, doctor,’ said he, ‘ that she was restored to her estate.’

‘ Very well,’ said the doctor; ‘ and if I am to be the Oniropolos, I believe the dream will come to pass. To say the truth, I have rather a better opinion of dreams than Horace had. Old Homer says, they came from Jupiter; and as to your dream, I have often had it in my waking thoughts, that some time or other that roguery (for so I was always
‘ convinced

‘convinced it was) would be brought to light: for the same Homer says, as you, madam, (meaning Mrs. Atkinson) very well know,

Εἶπερ γὰρ τε καὶ αὐτίκ' Ὀλύμπῳ ἡ ἐτέλεσεν,
 Ἐκ τε καὶ ὅτε τελεῖ· σὺν τε μεγάλῳ ἀπίτιστα
 Σὺν σφῆσιν κεφαλῇσι, χυναίξί τε καὶ τεκέεσσιν*.

‘I have no Greek ears, sir,’ said Mrs. Atkinson. ‘I believe, I could understand it in the Delphin Homer.’

‘I wish,’ cries he, ‘my dear child, (to Amelia) you would read a little in the Delphin Aristotle, or else in some Christian divine, to learn a doctrine which you will one day have a use for. I mean to bear the hardest of all human conflicts, and support with an even temper, and without any violent transports of mind, a sudden gust of prosperity.’

‘Indeed,’ cries Amelia, ‘I should almost think my husband and you, doctor, had some very good news to tell me, by your using, both of you, the same introduction. As far as I know myself, I think I can answer, I can support any degree of prosperity; and I think I yesterday shewed I could: for I do assure you, it is not in the power of fortune to try me with such another transition from grief to joy, as I conceived from seeing my husband in prison and at liberty.’

‘Well, you are a good girl,’ cries the doctor, and ‘after I have put on my spectacles I will try you.’

The doctor then took out a news paper, and read as follows:

‘Yesterday one Murphy, an eminent attorney at law, was committed to Newgate, for the forgery of a will under which an estate hath been for many years detained from the right owner.’

Now in this paragraph there is something very remarkable, and that is—that it is true: but *opus est*

* ‘If Jupiter doth not immediately execute his vengeance, he will however execute it at last; and their transgressions shall fall heavily on their own heads, and on their wives and children.’

explanatum. In the Delphin edition of this news paper, there is the following note upon the words *right owner*:

'The right owner of this estate is a young lady of the highest merit, whose maiden name was Harris, and who some time since was married to an idle fellow, one lieutenant Booth. And the best historians assure us, that letters from the elder sister of this lady, which manifestly prove the forgery, and clear up the whole affair, are in the hands of an old parson called Dr. Harrison.'

'And is this really true,' cries Amelia?

'Yes, really, and sincerely,' cries the doctor. 'The whole estate: for your mother left it you all, and is as surely yours, as if you was already in possession.'

'Gracious Heaven,' cries she, falling on her knees, 'I thank you.'—And then starting up, she ran to her husband, and embracing him, cried, 'My dear love, I wish you joy: and I ought in gratitude to wish it you: for you are the cause of mine. It is upon yours, and my children's account, that I principally rejoice.'

Mrs. Atkinson rose from her chair, and jumped about the room for joy, repeating,

*Turne, quod optanti diuūm promittere nemo
Auderet, voluenda dies, en, attulit ultro*.*

Amelia now threw herself into a chair, complained she was a little faint, and begged a glass of water. The doctor advised her to be blooded; but she refused, saying, she required a vent of another kind.—— She then desired her children to be brought to her, whom she immediately caught in her arms, and having profusely cried over them for several minutes, declared she was easy. After which, she soon regained her usual temper and complexion.

That day they dined together, and in the afternoon they all, except the doctor, visited captain Atkinson;

* 'What none of all the Gods could grant thy vows,
' That, Turnus, this auspicious day bestows.

he repaired to the bailiff's house to visit the sick man, whom he found very chearful, the surgeon having assured him that he was in no manner of danger.

The doctor had a long spiritual discourse with Robinson, who assured him that he sincerely repented of his past life; that he was resolved to lead his future days in a different manner, and to make what amends he could for his sins to the society, by bringing one of the greatest rogues in it to justice. There was a circumstance which much pleased the doctor, and made him conclude that, however Robinson had been corrupted by his old master, he had naturally a good disposition. This was, that Robinson declared he was chiefly induced to the discovery by what had happened at the pawnbroker's, and by the miseries which he there perceived he had been instrumental in bringing on Booth and his family.

The next day Booth and his wife, at the doctor's instance, dined with colonel James and his lady, where they were received with great civility, and all matters were accommodated, without Booth even knowing a syllable of the challenge even to this day.

The doctor insisted very strongly on having Miss Harris taken into custody, and said, if she was his sister, he would deliver her to justice. He added besides, that it was impossible to screen her, and carry on the prosecution, or, indeed, recover the estate. Amelia at last begged the delay of one day only, in which time she wrote a letter to her sister informing her of the discovery, and the danger in which she stood, and begged her earnestly to make her escape, with many assurances that she would never suffer her to know any distress. This letter she sent away express, and it had the desired effect: for Miss Harris having received sufficient information from the attorney to the same purpose, immediately set out for Pool, and from thence to France, carrying with her all her money, most of her cloaths, and some few jewels. She had, indeed, packed up plate and jewels to the value of two thousand pound and upwards. But Booth, to whom Amelia communicated the letter, prevented her, by ordering the man that went with

the

the express (who had been a serjeant of the foot guards recommended to him by Atkinson) to suffer the lady to go whither she pleased, but not to take any thing with her except her cloaths, which he was carefully to search. These orders were obeyed punctually, and with these she was obliged to comply.

Two days after the bird was flown, a warrant from the lord chief justice arrived to take her up, the messenger of which returned with the news of her flight, highly to the satisfaction of Amelia, and consequently of Booth, and, indeed, not greatly to the grief of the doctor.

About a week afterwards, Booth and Amelia, with their children, and captain Atkinson and his lady, all set forwards together for Amelia's house, where they arrived amidst the acclamations of all the neighbours, and every public demonstration of joy.

They found the house ready prepared to receive them by Atkinson's friend, the old serjeant, and a good dinner prepared for them by Amelia's old nurse, who was addressed with the utmost duty by her son and daughter, most affectionately caressed by Booth and his wife, and by Amelia's absolute command seated next to herself at the table. At which, perhaps, were assembled some of the best and happiest people then in the world.

C H A P. IX.

In which the history is concluded.

HAVING brought our history to a conclusion, as to those points in which we presume our reader was chiefly interested, in the foregoing chapter; we shall in this, by way of epilogue, endeavour to satisfy his curiosity, as to what hath since happened to the principal personages of whom we have treated in the foregoing pages.

Colonel James and his lady, after living in a polite manner for many years together, at last agreed to live in as polite a manner asunder. The Colonel hath kept Miss Matthews ever since, and is at length grown to

to doat on her (though now very disagreeable in her person, and immensely fat) to such a degree, that he submits to be treated by her in the most tyrannical manner.

He allows his lady eight hundred pounds a year, with which she divides her time between Tunbridge, Bath, and London, and passes about nine hours in the twenty-four at cards. Her income is lately increased by three thousand pounds left her by her brother colonel Bath, who was killed in a duel about six years ago, by a gentleman who told the colonel he differed from him in opinion.

The noble peer and Mrs. Ellifon have been both dead several years, and both of the consequences of their favourite vices; Mrs. Ellifon having fallen a martyr to her liquor, and the other to his amours, by which he was at last become so rotten, that he stunk above ground.

The attorney, Murphy, was brought to his trial at the Old-Bailey; where, after much quibbling about the meaning of a very plain act of parliament, he was at length convicted of forgery, and was soon afterwards hanged at Tyburn.

The witness for some time seemed to reform his life, and received a small pension from Booth; after which, he returned to vicious courses, took a purse on the highway, was detected and taken, and followed the last steps of his old master. So apt are men, whose manners have been once thoroughly corrupted, to return, from any dawn of an amendment, into the dark paths of vice.

As to Miss Harris, she lived three years with a broken heart at Boulogne, where she received annually fifty pounds from her sister, who was hardly prevailed on by Dr. Harrison not to send her a hundred, and then died in a most miserable manner.

Mr. Atkinson upon the whole hath led a very happy life with his wife, though he hath been sometimes obliged to pay proper homage to her superior understanding and knowledge. This, however, he chearfully submits to, and she makes him proper returns of fondness. They have two fine boys, of whom they are equally

equally fond. He is lately advanced to the rank of captain, and last summer both he and his wife paid a visit of three months to Booth and his wife.

Dr. Harrison is grown old in years, and in honour; beloved and respected by all his parishioners, and by all his neighbours. He divides his time between his parish, his old town, and Booth's — at which last place he had, two years ago, a gentle fit of the gout, being the first attack of that distemper. During this fit, Amelia was his nurse, and her two eldest daughters sat up alternately with him for a whole week. The eldest of those girls, whose name is Amelia, is his favourite; she is the picture of her mother, and it is thought the doctor hath distinguished her in his will; for he hath declared that he will leave his whole fortune, except some few charities, among Amelia's children.

As to Booth and Amelia, fortune seems to have made them large amends for the tricks she played them in their youth. They have, ever since the above period of this history, enjoyed an uninterrupted course of health and happiness. In about six weeks after Booth's first coming into the country, he went to London, and paid all his debts of honour; after which, and a stay of two days only, he returned into the country, and hath never since been thirty miles from home. He hath two boys, and four girls; the eldest of the boys, he who hath made his appearance in this history, is just come from the university, and is one of the finest gentlemen and best scholars of his age. The second is just going from school, and is intended for the church, that being his own choice. His eldest daughter is a woman grown, but we must not mention her age. A marriage was proposed to her the other day with a young fellow of a good estate, but she never would see him more than once; 'for doctor Harrison,' says she, 'told me he was illiterate, and I am sure he is ill-natured.' The second girl is three years younger than her sister; and the others are yet children.

Amelia is still the finest woman in England of her age. Booth himself often avers she is as handsome

as ever. Nothing can equal the serenity of their lives. Amelia declared to me the other day, that she did not remember to have seen her husband out of humour these ten years; and upon my insinuating to her, that he had the best of wives, she answered with a smile, that she ought to be so, for that he had made her the happiest of women.



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A N
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I N T O
T H E C A U S E S
O F

The late Increase of ROBBERS, &c.

W I T H
Some PROPOSALS for Remedying this
GROWING EVIL.

I N W H I C H

The present reigning VICES are impartially exposed ;
and the Laws that relate to the Provision for the
POOR, and to the Punishment of FELONS, are large-
ly and freely examined.

*Non jam sunt mediocres hominum libidines, non humanæ
audaciæ ac tolerandæ. Nihil cogitant nisi cædem, nisi
incendia, nisi rapinas.*

CIC. in Catil. 2da.

END OF THE

CAUSE

The late Increase of Robbery &c.

W. A. B. N.

THE NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR REMEDYING THE
GROWING EVIL

IN WHICH

the late increasing Vices are ingeniously exposed;
and a new and simple method is proposed for the
prevention of the same, with a full and
complete examination.

By the late Mr. James M. Smith, author of
"The Art of Living," &c. &c. &c.
New York: Printed and Sold by
G. B. RILEY, at the City of New York.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
PHILIP Lord HARDWICK,
Lord High Chancellor of GREAT BRITAIN.

MY LORD,

AS the reformation of any part of our civil polity requires as much the knowledge of the statesman as of the lawyer, the following sheets are, with the strictest propriety, addressed to a person of the highest eminence in both these capacities.

The subject of this treatise cannot be thought unworthy of such a protection, because it touches only those evils which have arisen in the lower branches of our constitution. This consideration will account for their having hitherto escaped your lordship's notice; and that alone will account for their having so long prevailed: but your lordship will not, for this reason, think it below your regard; since, however ignoble the parts may be in which the disease is first engendered, it will in time be sure to affect the whole body.

The subject, indeed, is of such importance, that we may truly apply to it those words of Cicero, in his first book of laws: *Ad Reipublicæ formandas et stabilendas vires, et ad sanandos Populos omnis pergit Oratio.* How far I have been able to succeed in the execution, must be submitted to your lordship's candour. I hope, I have no immodest opinion of my own abilities; but, in truth, I have much less confidence in my authority. Indeed the highest authority is necessary to any degree of success in an attempt of this kind. Permit me, therefore, my lord, to fly to the protection of the highest which doth now exist, or which perhaps ever did exist, in this kingdom.

This great sanction is, I am convinced, always ready to support what really tends to the public utility: if I fail, therefore, of obtaining the honour of it, I shall be fully satisfied that I do not deserve it, and shall sit down contented with the merit of a good intent: for surely there is some praise due to the bare design of doing a service to the public. Nor can my enemies, I think, deny that I am entirely disinterested in my endeavour, unless they should discover the gratification which my ambition finds in the opportunity of this address.

I am, with the most profound respect,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

most devoted humble servant,

HENRY FIELDING.

P R E F A C E.

THERE is nothing so much talked of, and so little understood in this country, as the *Constitution*. It is a word in the mouth of every man; and yet, when we come to discourse of the matter, there is no subject on which our ideas are more confused and perplexed. Some, when they speak of the constitution, confine their notions to the law; others to the legislature; others, again, to the governing or executive part; and many there are, who jumble all these together in one idea. One error, however, is common to them all: for all seem to have the conception of something uniform and permanent, as if the constitution of England partook rather of the nature of the soil than of the climate, and was as fixed and constant as the former, not as changing and variable as the latter.

Now in this word, *The Constitution*, are included the original and fundamental law of the kingdom, from whence all powers are derived, and by which they are circumscribed; all legislative and executive authority; all those municipal provisions which are commonly called *The Laws*; and, lastly, the customs, manners, and habits of the people. These, joined together, do, I apprehend, form the political; as the several members of the body, the animal œconomy, with the humours and habit, compose that which is called the natural constitution.

The Greek philosophy will, perhaps, help us to a better idea; for neither will the several constituent parts, nor the contexture of the whole, give an adequate notion of the word. By the *Constitution* is, indeed, rather meant something which results from the order and disposition of the whole; something resembling that harmony for which the *Theban* in *Plato's Phædo* contends; which he calls ἀόρατον καὶ ἀσώματον, *something invisible and incorporeal*. For many of the Greeks imagined the soul to result from the *ἁρμῶν* or composition of the parts of the body; when these were properly tempered together, as har-

mony doth from the proper composition of the several parts in a well-tuned musical instrument: in the same manner, from the disposition of the several parts in a state, arises that which we call the *Constitution*.

In this disposition the laws have so considerable a share, that, as no man can perfectly understand the whole, without knowing the parts of which it is composed, it follows, that, to have a just notion of our constitution, without a competent knowledge of the laws, is impossible. Without this, the reading over our historians may afford amusement, but will very little instruct us in the true essentials of our constitution. Nor will this knowledge alone serve our purpose. The mere lawyer, however skilful in his profession, who is not versed in the genius, manners, and habits of the people, makes but a wretched politician. Hence the historian, who is ignorant of our law, and the lawyer who is ignorant of our history, have agreed in that common error, remarked above, of considering our constitution as something fixed and permanent: for the exterior form of government (however the people are changed) still, in a great degree, remains what it was; and the same, notwithstanding all its alterations, may be said of the law.

To explain this a little farther: From the original of the lower house of parliament to this day, the supreme power hath been vested in the king and the two houses of parliament. These two houses have, each at different times, carried very different weights in the balance, and yet the form of government remained still one and the same; so hath it happened to the law; the same courts of justice, the same form of trials, &c. have preserved the notion of identity, though, in real truth, the present governing powers and the present legal provisions bear so little resemblance to those of our ancestors in the reign of king John, or indeed in later times, that, could any lawyer or statesman of those days be recalled to life, he would make, I believe, a very indifferent figure in Westminster-hall, or in any of the parts there adjacent.

To perceive the alterations in our constitution, doth, in fact, require a pretty just knowledge both of the people and of the laws: for either of these may be

greatly changed, without producing any immediate effect on the other. The alterations in the great wheels of state above-mentioned, which are so visible in our historians, are not noticed in our laws, as very few of the great changes in the law have fallen under the eye of our historians.

Many of both kinds have appeared in our constitution; but I shall at present confine myself to one only, as being that which principally relates to the subject of the following treatise.

If the constitution, as I have above asserted, be the result of the disposition of the several parts before-mentioned, it follows, that this disposition can never be altered, without producing a proportional change in the constitution. 'If the soul,' says Simmias in *Plato*, 'be a harmony resulting from the disposition of the corporeal parts, it follows, that when this disposition is confounded, and the body is torn by diseases or other evils, the soul immediately (whatever be her divinity) must perish.' This will be apparent, if we cast our eyes a moment towards the animal œconomy; and it is no less true in the political.

The customs, manners, and habits of the people, do, as I have said, form one part of the political constitution; if these are altered, therefore, this must be changed likewise; and here, as in the natural body, the disorder of any part will, in its consequence, affect the whole.

One known division of the people in this nation is into the nobility, the gentry, and the commonalty. What alterations have happened among the two former of these, I shall not at present enquire; but that the last, in their customs, manners, and habits, are greatly changed from what they were, I think to make appear.

If we look into the earliest ages, we shall find the condition of this third part to have been very low and mean. The highest order of this rank, before the Conquest, were those tenants in socage, who held their lands by the service of the plough; who, as Littleton tells us, 'were to come with their plough for certain days in the year, to plough and sow the de-

'mesne of the lords;' 'as the villains,' saith the same author, 'were to carry and recarry the dung of his lord, spread it upon his land, and to perform such like services.'

This latter was rightly accounted a slavish tenure. The villains were indeed considered in law as a kind of chattel belonging to their masters: for though these had not the power of life and death over them, nor even of maiming them with impunity, yet these villains had not even the capacity of purchasing lands or goods; but the lord, on such purchase, might enter into the one, and seize the other for his own use. And as for the land which they held in villenage, though lord Coke says it was not only held at the will of the lord, but according to the custom of the manor; yet, in antient times, if the lord ejected them, they were manifestly without remedy.

And as to the former, though they were accounted freemen, yet were they obliged to swear fealty to their lord; and though Mr. Rapin be mistaken, when he says they could not alienate the land (for before the statute of *Magna Charta*, chap. 32. they could have given or sold the whole, but without any alteration of the tenure) yet was the estate of these but very mean. 'Though they are called freemen,' says lord Coke, 'yet they ploughed, harrowed, reaped, and mowed, &c. for the lord;' and Bracton, *Dicuntur Socmanni eo quod deputati sunt tantummodo ad culturam*.

Besides such as were bound by their tenures to the service of agriculture, the number of freemen below the degree of gentry, and who got their livelihood in the mercantile or mechanical way, was very inconsiderable. As to the servants, they were chiefly bound by tenure, and those of the lower sort differed very little from slaves.

That this estate of the commonalty is greatly changed, is apparent, and to this alteration many causes in subsequent ages have contributed.

First, The oath of fealty, or fidelity, which of old time was administered with great ceremony, became afterwards to be omitted; and though this fealty still remained

remained incident to every socage tenure; yet the omission of the form was not without its consequences; for, as lord Coke says, speaking of homage, *Prudent antiquity did, for the more solemnity and better memory and observation of that which is to be done, express substances under ceremonies.*

2dly, Whereas in the antient tenures the principal reservation was of personal services from the inferior tenants, the rent being generally trifling, such as hens, capons, roses spurs, hawks, &c. afterwards, the avarice or necessity of the lords incited them to convert these for the most part into money, which tended greatly to weaken the power of the lord, and to raise the freedom and independency of the tenant.

3dly, The dismembering manors by leases for years, as it flowed from the same sources, so it produced the same effects. These were probably very rare before the reign of Edward I. at which time the statute of Gloucester secured the estate of the tenant.

4thly, The estate of the villain or copyholder seems clearly, as I have said, to have originally been holden only at the will of the lord; but the law was afterwards altered, and in the reign of Edward IV, some of the best judges were of opinion, that if the copyholder was unlawfully ejected by his lord, he should have an action of trespass against him at the common law.

From this time the estate of the copyholder (which, as Briton tells us, was formerly a base tenure) began to grow into repute; and, though still distinguished in some privileges from a freehold, became the possession of many opulent and powerful persons.

By these and such like means the commonalty, by degrees, shook off their vassalage, and became more and more independent on their superiors. Even servants, in process of time, acquired a state of freedom and independency, unknown to this rank in any other nation; and which, as the law now stands, is inconsistent with a servile condition.

But nothing hath wrought such an alteration in this order of people, as the introduction of trade. This hath indeed given a new face to the whole nation, hath in a great measure subverted the former state of affairs, and hath almost totally changed the manners, customs, and habits of the people, more especially of the lower sort. The narrowness of their fortune is changed into wealth; the simplicity of their manners into craft; their frugality into luxury; their humility into pride; and their subjection into equality.

The philosopher, perhaps, will think this a bad exchange, and may be inclined to cry out with the poet,

—*Sævior armis*

Luxuria incubuit—

*Nullum crimen abest, facinusque libidinis, ex quo
Paupertas Romana perit.*

Again,

Prima peregrinos obscæna pecunia mores

Intulit, et turpi frægerunt sæcula luxu

Divitiæ molles—

But the politician finds many emoluments to compensate all the moral evils introduced by trade, by which the grandeur and power of the nation is carried to a pitch that it could never otherwise have reached; arts and sciences are improved, and human life is embellished with every ornament, and furnished with every comfort which it is capable of tasting.

In all these assertions he is right; but surely he forgets himself a little, when he joins the philosopher in lamenting the introduction of luxury as a casual evil; for as riches are the *certain* consequence of trade, so is luxury the no less *certain* consequence of riches; nay, trade and luxury do indeed support each other; and this latter, in its turn, becomes as useful to trade, as trade had been before to the support of luxury.

To prevent this consequence therefore of a flourishing commerce, is totally to change the nature of things, and to separate the effect from the cause: A matter as impossible in the political body as in the natural. Vices and diseases, with like physical necessity, arise from
certain

certain habits in both; and to restrain and palliate the evil consequences, is all that lies within the reach of art. How far it is the business of the politician to interfere in the case of luxury, we have attempted to shew in the following treatise.

Now, to conceive that so great a change as this in the people should produce no change in the constitution, is to discover, I think, as great ignorance as would appear in the physician, who should assert, that the whole state of the blood may be entirely altered from poor to rich, from cool to inflamed, without producing any alteration in the constitution of the man.

To put this in the clearest light: there appear to me to be four sorts of political power; that of bodily strength, that of the mind, the power of the purse, and the power of the sword. Under the second of these divisions may be ranged all the art of the legislator and politician, all the power of laws and government. These do constitute the civil power; and a state may then be said to be in good order, when all the other powers are subservient to this; when they own its superior excellence and energy, pay it a ready obedience, and all unite in support of its rule.

But so far are these powers from paying such voluntary submission, that they are all extremely apt to rebel, and to assert their own superiority; but none is more rebellious in its nature, or more difficult to be governed, than that of the purse or money. Self-opinion, arrogance, insolence, and impatience of rule, are its almost inseparable companions.

Now if these assertions are true, what an immense accession of this power hath accrued to the commonalty by the increase of trade? for though the other orders have acquired an addition by the same means, yet this is not in the same proportion, as every reader, who will revolve the proposition but a moment in his own mind, must be satisfied.

And what may we hence conclude? is that civil power, which was adapted to the government of this order of people in that state in which they were at the Conquest, capable of ruling them in their present situa-

tion? hath this civil power kept equal pace with them in the increase of its force, or hath it not rather, by the remissness of the magistrate, lost much of its antient energy? where is now that power of the sheriff, which could formerly awaken and arm a whole county in an instant? where is that *posse comitatus*, which attended at his beck? what is become of the constitutions of Alfred, which the reader will find set forth at large in the following treatise? what of the antient conservators of the peace? have the justices, on whom this whole power devolves, an authority sufficient for the purpose? In some counties, perhaps, you may find an overgrown tyrant, who lords it over his neighbours and tenants with despotic sway, and who is as regardless of the law as he is ignorant of it; but as to the magistrate of a less fortune, and more knowledge, every riotous independent butcher or baker, with two or three thousand pounds in his pocket, laughs at his power, and every pettyfogger makes him tremble.

It is a common and popular complaint, that the justices of peace have already too much power. Indeed a very little is too much, if it be abused; but, in truth, this complaint proceeds from a mistake of business for power: The business of the justice is indeed multiplied by a great number of statutes; but I know not of any (the riot act perhaps excepted) which hath at all enlarged his power. And what the force of that act is, and how able the magistrate is, by means of the civil power alone, to execute it in any popular commotion, I have myself experienced. But when a mob of chairmen or servants, or a gang of thieves and sharpers, are almost too big for the civil authority to suppress, what must be the case in a seditious tumult, or general riot of the people?

From what hath been said, I may, I think, conclude, that the constitution of this country is altered from its antient state.

2dly, That the power of the commonalty hath received an immense addition; and that the civil power
having

having not increased, but decreased, in the same proportion, is not able to govern them.

What may and must be the consequences of this, as well as what remedy can be applied to it, I leave to the consideration of others: I have proceeded far enough already on the subject, to draw sufficient ill-will on myself, from unmeaning or ill-meaning people, who either do not foresee the mischievous tendency of a total relaxation of government, or who have some private wicked purpose to effect from public confusion.

In plain truth, the principal design of this whole work, is to rouse the CIVIL power from its present lethargic state; a design, which alike opposes those wild notions of liberty that are inconsistent with all government, and those pernicious schemes of government, which are destructive of true liberty. However contrary indeed these principles may seem to each other, they have both the same common interest; or, rather, the former are the wretched tools of the latter: for anarchy is almost sure to end in some kind of tyranny.

Dr. Middleton, in his Life of Cicero, hath a fine observation to my present purpose, with which I will conclude this Preface.

‘ From the railleries of the Romans, (says he) on the *barbarity and misery of our island*, one cannot help reflecting on the surprising fate and revolutions of kingdoms: how Rome, once the mistress of the world, the seat of arts, empire, and glory, now lies sunk in sloth, ignorance, and poverty; enslaved to the most cruel as well as to the most contemptible of tyrants, *superstition and religious imposture*: while this remote country, anciently the jest and contempt of the *polite Romans*, is become the happy seat of liberty, plenty, and letters; flourishing in all the arts and refinements of civil life; yet running perhaps the same course which Rome itself had run before it; from virtuous industry to wealth; from wealth to luxury; from luxury to an impatience of discipline and corruption of morals; till, by a

- total degeneracy and loss of virtue, being grown
- ripe for destruction, it falls a prey at last to some
- hardy oppressor; and, with the loss of liberty,
- losing every thing else that is valuable, sinks gra-
- dually again into its original barbarism.



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It is the nature of the Roman (as he says)
 the Romans, and every nation, are capable of
 reflecting on the torments, and sufferings of
 kingdoms: how Rome, once the mistress of the
 world, the seat of arts, empire, and glory, has
 now sunk in deep ignorance, and poverty; and
 to the great end as well as to the most common
 of mankind, insatiable and restless desires;
 while this remote country, scarcely the seat and
 theatre of the Roman power, is become the
 seat of liberty, peace, and justice; flourishing in
 all the arts and refinements of civil life; yet turning
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 of dissipation and corruption of morals; and, by a
 total

ENQUIRY

INTO

THE CAUSES

The late Increase of ROBBERS, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

THE great increase of Robberies within these few years, is an evil which to me appears to deserve some attention; and the rather as it seems (though already become so flagrant) not yet to have arrived to that height of which it is capable, and which it is likely to attain: For diseases in the political, as in the natural body, seldom fail going on to their crisis, especially when nourished and encouraged by faults in the constitution. In fact, I make no doubt, but that the streets of this town, and the roads leading to it, will shortly be impassable, without the utmost hazard; nor are we threatened with seeing less dangerous gangs of rogues among us, than those which the Italians call the Banditti.

Should this ever happen to be the case, we shall have sufficient reason to lament that remissness by which this evil was suffered to grow to so great a height. All distempers, if I may once more resume the allusion, the sooner they are opposed, admit of the easier and the safer cure. The great difficulty of extirpating desperate gangs of robbers, when once collected into a body, appears from our own history in former times. France hath given us a later example

ple in the long reign of Cartouche, and his Banditti; and this under an absolute monarchy, which affords much more speedy and efficacious remedies against these political disorders, than can be administered in a free state, whose forms of correction are extremely slow and incertain, and whose punishments are the mildest and the most void of terror of any other in the known world.

For my own part, I cannot help regarding these depredations in a most serious light: nor can I help wondering that a nation so jealous of her liberties, that from the slightest cause, and often without any cause at all, we are always murmuring at our superiors, should tamely and quietly support the invasion of her properties by a few of the lowest and vilest among us. Doth not this situation in reality level us with the most enslaved countries? If I am to be assaulted, and pillaged, and plundered; if I can neither sleep in my own house, nor walk the streets, nor travel in safety; is not my condition almost equally bad whether a licensed or unlicensed rogue, a dragoon or a robber, be the person who assaults and plunders me? the only difference which I can perceive is, that the latter evil appears to be more easy to remove.

If this be, as I clearly think it is, the case, surely there are few matters of more general concern than to put an immediate end to these outrages, which are already become so notorious, and which, as I observed, do seem to threaten us with such a dangerous increase. What indeed may not the public apprehend, when they are informed as an unquestionable fact, that there are at this time a great gang of rogues, whose number falls little short of a hundred, who are incorporated in one body, have officers and a treasury, and have reduced theft and robbery into a regular system. There are of this society men who appear in all disguises, and mix in most companies. Nor are they better versed in every art of cheating, thieving, and robbing, than they are armed with every method of evading the law, if they should ever be discovered, and an attempt made to bring them to justice. Here, if they fail in rescuing the prisoner, or (which seldom happens)

happens) in bribing or deterring the prosecutor, they have for their last resource some rotten members of the law to forge a defence for them, and a great number of false witnesses ready to support it.

Having seen the most convincing proofs of all this, I cannot help thinking it high time to put some stop to the further progress of such impudent and audacious insults, not only on the properties of the subject, but on the national justice, and on the laws themselves. The means of accomplishing this (the best which suggest themselves to me) I shall submit to the public consideration; after having first enquired into the causes of the present growth of this evil, and whence we have great reason to apprehend its further increase. Some of these I am too well versed in the affairs of this world to expect to see removed; but there are others, which, without being over sanguine, we may hope to remedy; and thus perhaps one ill consequence, at least, of the more stubborn political diseases may cease.

S E C T. I.

Of too frequent and expensive diversions among the lower kind of people.

FIRST then, I think, that the vast torrent of luxury, which of late years hath poured itself into this nation, hath greatly contributed to produce, among many others, the mischief I here complain of. I aim not here to satirize the great, among whom luxury is probably rather a moral than a political evil. But vices no more than diseases will stop with them; for bad habits are as infectious by example, as the plague itself by contact. In free countries, at least, it is a branch of liberty claimed by the people to be as wicked and as profligate as their superiors. Thus while the nobleman will emulate the grandeur of a prince; and the gentleman will aspire to the proper state of the nobleman, the tradesman steps from behind his counter into the vacant place of the gentleman. Nor doth the confusion end here: it reaches the very dregs

dregs of the people, who, aspiring still to a degree beyond that which belongs to them, and not being able by the fruits of honest labour to support the state which they affect, disdain the wages to which their industry would intitle them; and abandoning themselves to idleness, the more simple and poor spirited betake themselves to a state of starving and beggary, while those of more art and courage become thieves, sharpers, and robbers.

Could luxury be confined to the palaces of the great, the society would not perhaps be much affected with it; at least, the mischiefs, which I am now intending to obviate, can never be the consequence. For though, perhaps, there is not more of real virtue in the higher state, yet the sense of honour is there more general and prevalent. But there is a much stronger reason. The means bear no probable proportion to the end: for the loss of thousands, or of a great estate, is not to be relieved or supplied by any means of common theft or robbery.—With regard to such evils, therefore the legislature might be justified in leaving the punishment, as well as the pernicious consequence, to end in the misery, distress, and sometimes utter ruin, of a private family. But when this vice descends downward to the tradesman, the mechanic, and the labourer, it is certain to engender many political mischiefs; and among the rest it is most evidently the parent of theft and robbery, to which not only the motive of want but of shame conduces: for there is no greater degree of shame than the tradesman generally feels at the first inability to make his regular payments; nor is there any difficulty which he would not undergo to avoid it. Here then the highway promises, and hath, I doubt not, often, given relief. Nay, I remember very lately a highwayman who confessed several robberies before me, his motive to which, he assured me (and so it appeared) was to pay a bill that was shortly to become due. In this case, therefore, the public becomes interested; and consequently the legislature is obliged to interpose.

To give a final blow to luxury by any general prohibition, if it would be adviseable, is by no means possible.

possible. To say the truth, bad habits in the body politic, especially if of any duration, are seldom to be wholly eradicated. Palliatives alone are to be applied; and these too in a free constitution must be of the gentlest kind, and as much as possible adapted to the taste and genius of the people.

The gentlest method which I know, and at the same time perhaps one of the most effectual, of stopping the progress of vice, is by removing the temptation. Now the two great motives to luxury, in the mind of man, are vanity and voluptuousness. The former of these operates but little in this regard with the lower order of people. I do not mean that they have less of this passion than their betters; but the apparent impossibility of gratifying it this way deters them, and diverts at least this passion into another channel; for we find it puts them rather on vying with each other in the reputation of wealth, than in the outward appearance of shew and grandeur. Voluptuousness, or the love of pleasure, is that alone which leads them into luxury. Here then the temptation is with all possible care to be withdrawn from them.

Now what greater temptation can there be to voluptuousness, than a place where every sense and appetite of which it is compounded, are fed and delighted; where the eyes are feasted with shew and the ears with music, and where gluttony and drunkenness are allured by every kind of dainty; nay, where the finest women are exposed to view, and where the meanest person who can dress himself clean, may in some degree mix with his betters, and thus perhaps satisfy his vanity as well as his love of pleasure?

It may possibly be said that these diversions are cheap: I answer, that is one objection I have to them; was the price as high as that of a ridotto or an opera, it would, like these diversions, be confined to the higher people only; besides, the cheapness is really a delusion. Unthinking men are often deceived into expence; as I once knew an honest gentleman, who carried his wife and two daughters to a masquerade, being told that he could have four tickets for four guineas; but found afterward, that in dresses, masques,

masques, chairs, &c. the night's entertainment cost him almost twelve. I am convinced that many thousands of honest tradesmen have found their expences exceed their computation in a much greater proportion. And the sum of seven or eight shillings (which is a very moderate allowance for the entertainment of the smallest family) repeated once or twice a week through a summer, will make too large a deduction from the reasonable profits of any low mechanic.

Besides the actual expence in attending these places of pleasure, the loss of time and neglect of business are consequences which the inferior tradesman can by no means support. To be born for no other purpose than to consume the fruits of the earth, is the privilege (if it may be really called a privilege) of very few. The greater part of mankind must sweat hard to produce them, or society will no longer answer the purposes for which it was ordained. *Six days shalt thou labour*, was the positive command of God in his own republic. A severity, however, which the divine wisdom was pleased somewhat to relax; and appointed certain times of rest and recreation for his people. Such were the feast of the unleavened bread, the feast of the weeks, and the feast of the tabernacles. On which occasions it is written, *Thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy servant, and thy maid, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow [a].*

All other nations have imitated this divine institution. It is true among the Greeks, arising from the nature of their superstition, there were many festivals; yet scarce any of these were universal, and few attended with any other than religious ceremonies [b]. The Roman calender is thinner strewed with these seasons of idleness. Indeed, there seems to have been one only

[a] Exod. chap. xxiv. Deut. chap. xvi.

[b] The gods, says Plato, pitying the laborious condition to which men were born, appointed holy rites to themselves, as seasons of rest to men; and gave them the Muses, with Apollo their leader, and Bacchus, to assist in the celebrations, &c. De Leg. l. ii. p. 787. edit. Ficini.

kind of universal sport and revelling amongst them, which they called the *Saturnalia*, when much too great indulgence was given to all kinds of licentiousness. Public scenes of rendezvous they had none. As to the Grecian women, it is well known, they were almost intirely confined to their own houses; where the very entertainment of their finest ladies was only works of the finer sort. And the Romans, by the Orchian law, which was made among many others for the suppression of luxury, and was published in the third year from Cato's censorship, thought proper to limit the number of persons who were to assemble even at any private feast [c]. Nay, the exhibitions of the theatre were suffered only at particular seasons, and on holy-days.

Nor are our own laws silent on this head, with regard at least to the lowest sort of people, whose diversions have been confined to certain stated times. Mr. Pulton [d], speaking of those games and assemblies of the people which are lawful, says, that they are lawful at certain places and seasons of the year, allowed by old and ancient customs. The statute of Henry VIII. [e] goes farther, and expressly enacts, that no manner of artificer or craftsman, of any handicraft or occupation, husbandman, apprentice, &c. shall play at the tables, tennis, dice, cards, bowls, &c. out of Christmas, under the penalty of 20s.

Thus we find that by divine as well as human institution, as well by our own laws as those of other countries, the diversions of the people have been limited and restrained to certain seasons: Under which limitations, Seneca calls these diversions the necessary temperament of labour. 'Some remission,' says he, 'must be given to our minds, which will spring up the better and more brisk from rest. It is with the mind as with a fruitful field, whose fertility will be exhausted if we give it no intermission. The same will accrue to the mind by incessant labours, where-

[c] Macrob. Saturnal. lib. ii. c. xiii. Note, This Riot Act passed in one of the freest ages of the Roman republic.

[d] De Pace, fol. 25.

[e] 33 Hen. VIII. c. ix.

' as both from gentle remission will acquire strength;
 ' From constant labour arises a certain dulness and
 ' languor of the spirits; nor would men with such
 ' eagerness affect them, if sport or merriment had not
 ' a certain natural sweetness inherent in themselves;
 ' the frequent use of which, however, will destroy all
 ' gravity and force in our minds. Sleep is necessary
 ' to our refreshment; but if this be continued night
 ' and day, it will become death. There is a great
 ' difference between the remission of any thing and its
 ' dissolution. Lawgivers, therefore, instituted cer-
 ' tain holydays, that the people might be compelled
 ' by law to merriment, interposing this as a necessary
 ' temperament to their labours [f].

Thus the Greek and Latin philosophers, though
 they derive the institution differently, the one alledg-
 ing a divine and the other a human original, both
 agree that a necessary relaxation from labour was the
 only end for which diversion was invented and allowed
 to the people. This institution, as the former of these
 great writers tells us, was grossly perverted even in his
 time; but surely neither then, nor in any age or na-
 tion, until now, was this perversion carried to so scan-
 dalous an excess as it is at present in this kingdom, and
 especially in and near the metropolis, where the places
 of pleasure are almost become numberless: for, besides
 those great scenes of rendezvous, where the nobleman
 and his taylor, the lady of quality and her tirewoman,
 meet together and form one common assembly, what
 an immense variety of places have this town and its
 neighbourhood set apart for the amusement of the low-
 est order of the people; and where the master of the
 house, or wells, or garden, may be said to angle only
 in the kennels, where, baiting with the vilest mate-
 rials, he catches only the thoughtless and tasteless rab-
 ble? and these are carried on, not on a single day, or
 in a single week; but all of them during half, and
 some during the whole year.

If a computation was made of the money expended
 in these temples of idleness by the artificer, the handi-

craft, the apprentice, and even the common labourer, the sum would appear excessive; but without putting myself to that trouble, I believe the reader will permit me to conclude that it is much greater than such persons can or ought to afford; especially as idleness, its necessary attendant, adds greatly to the debtor's side in the account; and that the necessary consequence must be ruin to many, who, from being useful members of the society, will become a heavy burden or absolute nuisance to the public; it being indeed a certain method to fill the streets with beggars, and the gaols with debtors and thieves.

That this branch of luxury hath grown to its present height, is owing partly to a defect in the laws; and this defect may, with great decency and respect to the legislature, be very truly imputed to the recency of the evil; for, as our ancestors knew it not, they may be well excused for not having foreseen and guarded against it. If therefore it should seem now necessary to be retrenched, a new law will, I apprehend, be necessary for that purpose; the powers of the magistrate being scarce extensive enough, under any provision extant, to destroy a hydra now become so pregnant and dangerous. And it would be too dangerous as well as too invidious a task to oppose the mad humours of the populace, by the force of any doubtful obsolete law; which, as I have hinted before, could not have been directly levelled at a vice, which did not exist at the time when the law was made.

But, while I am recommending some restraint of this branch of luxury, which surely appears to be necessary, I would be understood to aim at the retrenchment only, not at the extirpation, of diversion; nay, and in this restraint, I confine myself entirely to the lower order of people. Pleasure always hath been, and always will be, the principal business of persons of fashion and fortune, and more especially of the ladies, for whom I have infinitely too great an honour and respect to rob them of any their least amusement. Let them have their plays, operas, and oratorios, their masquerades and ridottos; their assemblies, drums, routs,

routs, riots, and hurricanes; their Ranelagh and Vauxhall; their Bath, Tunbridge, Bristol, Scarborough, and Cheltenham; and let them have their beaus and dangles to attend them at all these; it is the only use for which such beaus are fit; and I have seen, in the course of my life, that it is the only one to which, by sensible women, they are applied.

In diversion, as in many other particulars, the upper part of life is distinguished from the lower. Let the great therefore answer for the employment of their time, to themselves, or to their spiritual governors. The society will receive some temporal advantage from their luxury. The more toys which children of all ages consume, the brisker will be the circulation of money, and the greater the increase of trade.

The business of the politician is only to prevent the contagion from spreading to the useful part of mankind, the ΕΠΙΠΙΟΝΟΝ ΠΕΦΥΚΟΣ ΓΕΝΟΣ [g]; and this is the business of persons of fashion and fortune too, in order that the labour and industry of the rest may administer to their pleasures, and furnish them with the means of luxury. To the upper part of mankind Time is an enemy, and (as they themselves often confess) their chief labour is to kill it; whereas, with the others, time and money are almost synonymous; and as they have very little of each to spare, it becomes the legislature, as much as possible, to suppress all temptations whereby they may be induced too profusely to squander either the one or the other; since all such profusion must be repaired at the cost of the public.

Such places of pleasure, therefore, as are totally set apart for the use of the great world, I meddle not with. And though Ranelagh and Vauxhall, by reason of their price, are not entirely appropriated to the people of fashion, yet they are seldom frequented by any below the middle rank; and a strict regard to decency is preserved in them both. But surely two such places are sufficient to contain all those who have any title to spend their time in this idle, though otherwise

innocent way. Nor should such a fashion be allowed to spread into every village round London, and by degrees all over the kingdom; by which means, not only idleness, but all kinds of immorality, will be encouraged.

I cannot dismiss this head, without mentioning a notorious nuisance, which hath lately arisen in this town; I mean, those balls where men and women of loose reputation meet in disguised habits. As to the masquerade in the Hay-market, I have nothing to say; I really think it a silly rather than a vicious entertainment; but the case is very different with these inferior masquerades; for these are indeed no other than the temples of drunkenness, lewdness, and all kind of debauchery.

S E C T. II.

Of DRUNKENNESS, a second consequence of luxury among the vulgar.

BUT the expence of money, and loss of time, with their certain consequences, are not the only evils which attend the luxury of the vulgar; drunkenness is almost inseparably annexed to the pleasures of such people; a vice by no means to be construed as a spiritual offence alone, since so many temporal mischiefs arise from it; amongst which are very frequently robbery and murder itself.

I do not know a more excellent institution than that of Pittacus, mentioned by Aristotle in his Politics [b]; by which a blow given by a drunken man, was more severely punished than if it had been given by one that was sober; for Pittacus, says Aristotle, considered the utility of the public (as drunken men are more apt to strike) and not the excuse, which might otherwise be allowed to their drunkenness. And so far both the civil law and our own have followed this institution, that neither have admitted drunkenness to be an excuse for any crime.

[b] L. ii. c. 10.

This odious vice (indeed the parent of all others) as history informs us, was first introduced into this kingdom by the Danes, and with very mischievous effects. Wherefore that excellent prince Edgar the peaceable, when he set about reforming the manners of his people, applied himself very particularly to the remedy of this great evil, and ordered silver or gold pins to be fixed to the sides of their pots and cups, beyond which it was not lawful for any person to drink [i].

What penalty was affixed to the breach of this institution, I know not; nor do I find any punishment in our books for the crime of drunkenness, till the time of Jac. I. in the fourth year of whose reign it was enacted, 'That every person lawfully convicted of drunkenness shall, for every such offence, forfeit the sum of five shillings, to be paid within a week next after his, her, or their conviction, to the hands of the church-wardens of the parish where, &c. to the use of the poor. In default of payment, the sum to be levied by distress; and, in default of distress, the offender is to be committed to the stocks, there to remain for the space of six hours [k].'

For the second offence, they are to be bound to their good behaviour, with two sureties, in a recognizance of ten pounds [l].

Nor is only that degree of drunkenness forbidden, which Mr. Dalton describes, 'so as to stagger and reel to and fro, and where the same legs which carry him into a house, cannot carry him out again [m];' for, by the same act of parliament, all persons who continue drinking or tipling in any inn, victualling-house, or ale-house, in their own city, town or parish (unless, such as being invited by a traveller, shall accompany him during his necessary abode there; or except labouring and handicraftsmen in cities, and corporate and market towns, upon a working day, for an hour at dinner-time, in ale-houses, where they take their diet; and except labourers and workmen,

[i] Echard, p. 88.
chap. v. sect. 6.

[k] Jac. I. cap. v.

[l] Jac. I.

[m] Dalt. chap. vii. sect. 5.

who, during their continuance in any work, shall lodge or victual in any inn, &c. or except for some urgent and necessary occasion, to be allowed by two justices of the peace) shall forfeit the sum of three shillings and sixpence, for the use of the poor; to be levied as before, and, for want of distress, to be put in the stocks for four hours [n].

This act hath been still farther enforced by another in the same reign [o]. By the latter act, the tipler is liable, whether his habitation be within the same or any other parish. 2dly, The proof by one witness is made sufficient; and, 3dly, A very extraordinary clause is added, by which the oath of the party offending, after having confessed his own crime, is made evidence against any other offender, though at the same time.

Thus we see the legislature have taken the utmost care not only to punish, but even to prevent, this vice of drunkenness, which the preamble of one of the foregoing statutes calls a *loathsome* and *odious sin*, and the root and foundation of many other enormous sins, as murder, &c. Nor doth the wisdom of our law stop here. Our cautious ancestors have endeavoured to remove the temptation, and, in a great measure, to take away from the people their very power of offending this way. And this by going to the fountain-head, and endeavouring to regulate and restrain the scenes of these disorders, and to confine them to those uses for which they were at first designed; namely, for the rest, refreshment, and convenience of travellers.

A cursory view of the statutes on this head will demonstrate of what consequence to society the suppression of this vice was in the opinion of our ancestors.

By the common law, inns and ale-houses might be kept *ad libitum*; but if any disorders were suffered in them, they were indictable as a common nuisance.

The first reform which I find to have been made by parliament, was in the reign of Henry VII [p],

[n] Jac. I. chap. iv. sect. 4. & 1 Jac. I. chap. ix.

[o] 21 Jac. I. chap. vii.

[p] 11 Hen. VII.

when two justices were empowered to suppress an ale-house.

The statute of Edward VI [q] is the first which requires a precedent licence. By this act, no man can keep an ale-house, without being licenced by the sessions, or by two justices; but now, by a late statute, all licences granted by justices out of their sessions are void [r].

By the statute of Charles I [s], which alters the penalties of that of Edward VI. the punishment for keeping an ale-house, or common selling ale, beer, cyder, and perry, without a licence, is to pay twenty shillings to the use of the poor, to be levied by distress; which, if satisfaction be not made within three days, is to be sold. And if there be no goods whereon to distrain, and the money be not paid within six days after conviction, the offender is to be delivered to the constable, or some inferior officer, to be whipped. For the second offence, he is to be committed to the house of correction for a month; and for the third, he is to be committed to the said house, till, by order of the justices, at their general sessions, he be discharged.

The conviction is to be on the view of the justice, confession of the party, or by the oath of two witnesses.

And by this statute, if the constable or officer to whom the party is committed to be whipt, &c. do not execute his warrant, the justice shall commit him to prison, there to remain till he shall procure some one to execute the said warrant, or until he shall pay forty shillings to the use of the poor.

The justices, at the time of granting the licence, shall take a recognizance from the party not to suffer any unlawful games, nor other disorders, in his house; which is to be certified to the sessions; and the justices there have a power to proceed for the forfeiture [t].

[q] 5 Edw. VI. c. xxv.

[s] 3 Car. I. cap. i.

[r] 2 G. II. c. xxviii. sect. 11.

[t] 5 E. VI. ubi sup.

By the statute of Jac. I. [u], ale-house-keepers, who suffer townsmen to sit tipling (unless in the cases abovementioned [w], forfeit ten shillings to the poor; the distress to be sold within six days; and if no distress can be had, the party is to be committed till the forfeiture is paid.

Vintners, who keep inns or victualling-houses, are within this act [x].

And by two several statutes [y], ale-house-keepers, convicted of this offence, are prohibited from keeping an ale-house for the space of three years.

Justices of peace likewise, for any disorders committed in ale-houses contrary to the condition of the recognizance, may suppress such houses [z]; but then the proceeding must be on the recognizance, and the breach of the condition proved [a].

Now, on the concise view of these several laws, it appears, that the legislature have been abundantly careful on this head; and that the only blame lies on the remissness with which these wholesome provisions have been executed.

But though I will not undertake to defend the magistrates of former times, who have surely been guilty of some neglect of their duty; yet, on behalf of the present commissioners of the peace, I must observe, their case is very different. What physicians tell us of the animal functions, will hold true when applied to laws; both, by long disuse, lose all their elasticity and force. Froward habits grow on men, as they do on children, by long indulgence; nor will either submit easily to correction in matters where they have been accustomed to act at their pleasure. They are very different offices, to execute a new or a well known law, and to revive one which is obsolete. In the case of a known law, custom brings men to submission; and in all new provisions, the ill-will, if any, is levelled at the legislature, who are much more able to support it than a few, or a single magistrate. If therefore it be thought proper to suppress this vice,

[u] Cap. ix. ubi sup.

[w] Supra, p. 14. in the case of Tiplers.

[x] 1 Car. I. cap. iv.

[y] 7 Jac. I. cap. x. 21 Jac. I. cap. vii.

[z] 5 E. VI. ubi sup.

[a] Salk. 45.

the legislature must once more take the matter into their hands; and to this, perhaps, they will be the more inclined, when it comes to their knowledge, that a new kind of drunkenness, unknown to our ancestors, is lately sprung up amongst us, and which, if not put a stop to, will infallibly destroy a great part of the inferiour people.

The drunkenness I here intend, is that acquired by the strongest intoxicating liquors, and particularly by that poison called *gin*; which, I have great reason to think, is the principal sustenance (if it may be so called) of more than an hundred thousand people in this metropolis. Many of these wretches there are, who swallow pints of this poison within the twenty-four hours; the dreadful effects of which I have the misfortune every day to see, and to smell too. But I have no need to insist on my own credit, or on that of my informers; the great revenue arising from the tax on this liquor (the consumption of which is almost wholly confined to the lowest order of people) will prove the quantity consumed better than any other evidence.

Now, besides the moral ill consequences occasioned by this drunkenness, with which, in this treatise, I profess not to deal; how greatly must this be supposed to contribute to those political mischiefs which this essay proposes to remedy? This will appear from considering, that, however cheap this vile potion may be, the poorer sort will not easily be able to supply themselves with the quantities they desire; for the intoxicating draught itself disqualifies them from using any honest means to acquire it, at the same time that it removes all sense of fear and shame, and emboldens them to commit every desperate and wicked enterprize. Many instances of this I see daily: wretches are often brought before me, charged with theft and robbery, whom I am forced to confine before they are in a condition to be examined; and when they have afterwards become sober, I have plainly perceived, from the state of the case, that the *gin* alone was the cause of the transgression; and have

been

been sometimes sorry that I was obliged to commit them to prison.

But, beyond all this, there is a political ill consequence of this drunkenness, which, though it doth not strictly fall within my present purpose, I shall be excused for mentioning; it being indeed the greatest evil of all, and which must, I think, awaken our legislature to put a final period to so destructive a practice. And this is that dreadful consequence, which must attend the poisonous quality of this pernicious liquor to the health, the strength, and the very being, of numbers of his majesty's most useful subjects. I have not enough of physical knowledge, to display the ill effects which such poisonous liquors produce in the constitution; for these I shall refer the reader to *The physical account of the nature of all distilled spirituous liquors, and the effect they have on human bodies* [b]. And though, perhaps, the consequence of this poison, as it operates slowly, may not so visibly appear in the diminution of the strength, health, and lives of the present generation; yet let a man cast his eyes but a moment towards our posterity, and there the dreadful consequences must strike on the meanest capacity, and must alarm, I think, the most sluggish degree of public spirit. What must become of the infant who is conceived in *gin*; with the poisonous distillations of which it is nourished both in the womb and at the breast? Are these wretched infants (if such can be supposed capable of arriving at the age of maturity) to become our future sailors, and our future grenadiers? Is it by the labour of such as these, that all the emoluments of peace are to be procured us; and all the dangers of war averted from us? What could an Edward or an Henry, a Marlborough or a Cumberland, effect with an army of such wretches? Doth not this polluted source, instead of producing servants for the husbandman or artificer; instead of providing recruits for the sea or the field; promise only to fill alms-houses and hospitals, and to infect the streets with stench and diseases?

[b] This was composed by a very learned divine, with the assistance of several physicians, and published in the year 1736. The title is, *Distilled Spirituous Liquors the Bane of the Nation*.

In solemn truth, there is nothing of more serious consideration, nor which more loudly calls for a remedy, than the evil now complained against. For what can be more worthy the care of the legislature, than to preserve the morals, the innocence, the health, strength and lives of a great part (I will repeat, the most useful part) of the people? So far am I, in my own opinion, from representing this in too serious or too strong a light, that I can find no words, or metaphor, adequate to my ideas on this subject. The first inventor of this diabolical liquor may be compared to the poisoner of a fountain, whence a large city was to derive its waters; the highest crime, as it hath been thought, of which human nature is capable. A degree of villany, indeed, of which I cannot recollect any example: but surely, if such was ever practised, the governors of that city could not be thought blameless, did they not endeavour, to the utmost, to withhold the citizens from drinking the poisonous draught; and if such a general thirst after it prevailed, as, we are told, possessed the people of Athens at the time of the plague [c], what could justify the not effectually cutting off all aqueducts, by which the poison was dispersed among the people.

Nor will any thing less than absolute deletion serve on the present occasion. It is not making men pay 50*l.* or 500*l.* for a licence to poison; nor enlarging the quantity from two gallons to ten, which will extirpate so stubborn an evil. Here may, perhaps, be no little difficulty. To lay the axe to the still-head, and prohibit all distillery in general, would destroy the chemist. If distilling this or that spirit was forbidden, we know how easily all partial prohibitions are evaded; nay, the chemist (was the matter confined to him) would soon probably become a common distiller, and his shop no better than a ginshop; since what is more common than for men to adopt the morals of a

[c] *Ἐδρασαν ἐς ὀρεῖα ἀναύσω τῇ δίψῃ ἐννεχόμενοι.* They ran into the wells, being constantly possessed by an inexhausted thirst. Thucydid, p. 112. edit. Hudsoni.

thief at a fire, and to work their own private emolument out of a public mischief. Suppose all spirituous liquors were, together with other poison, to be locked up in the chemists or apothecaries shops, thence never to be drawn, till some excellent physician calls them forth for the cure of nervous distempers; or suppose the price was to be raised so high, by a severe impost, that gin would be placed entirely beyond the reach of the vulgar! or perhaps the wisdom of the legislature may devise a better and more effectual way.

But if the difficulty be really insuperable, or if there be any political reason against the total demolition of this poison, so strong as to countervail the preservation of the morals, health and beings of such numbers of his majesty's subjects; let us, however, in some measure, palliate the evil, and lessen its immediate ill consequences, by a more effectual provision against drunkenness than any we have at present, in which the method of conviction is too tedious and dilatory. Some little care on this head is surely necessary: for though the encrease of thieves, and the destruction of morality; though the loss of our labourers, our sailors, and our soldiers, should not be sufficient reasons; there is one which seems to be unanswerable, and that is, the loss of our gin-drinkers: since, should the drinking of this poison be continued in its present height during the next twenty years, there will, by that time, be very few of the common people left to drink it.

S E C T. III.

Of GAMING among the vulgar; a third consequence of their luxury.

I COME now to the last great evil which arises from the luxury of the vulgar; and this is gaming: a school in which most highwaymen of great eminence have been bred. This vice is the more dangerous, as it is deceitful, and, contrary to every other species of luxury, flatters its votaries with the hopes of increasing their wealth; so that avarice itself

is so far from securing us against its temptations, that it often betrays the more thoughtless and giddy part of mankind into them; promising riches without bounds, and those to be acquired by the most sudden as well as easy and indeed pleasant means.

And here I must again remind the reader, that I have only the inferiour part of mankind under my consideration. I am not so ill-bred as to disturb the company at a polite assembly; nor so ignorant of our constitution, as to imagine, that there is a sufficient energy in the executive part to controul the œconomy of the great, who are beyond the reach of any, unless capital, laws. Fashion, under whose guidance they are, and which created the evil, can alone cure it. With patience therefore must we wait, till this notable mistress of the few shall, in her good time, accomplish so desirable a change: in fact, till great men become wiser or better; till the prevalence of some laudable taste shall teach them a worthier manner of employing their time; till they have sense enough to be reasoned, modesty enough to be laughed, or conscience enough to be frightened, out of a silly, a shameful and a sinful profligacy, attended with horrid waste of time, and the cruel destruction of the families of others, or of their own.

In the mean time we may, I think, reasonably desire of these great personages, that they would keep their favorite vice to themselves, and not suffer others, whose birth or fortune gives them no title to be above the terror of the laws, or the censure of their betters, to share with them in this privilege. Surely we may give great men the same advice, which Archer, in the play, gives to the officers of the army; *To kick out all — in red but their own.* What temptations can gamesters of fashion have, to admit *inferiour* sharpers into their society? Common sense, surely, will not suffer a man to risque a fortune against one who hath none of his own to stake against it.

I am well apprised that this is not much the case with persons of the first figure; but to gentlemen (and especially the younger sort) of the second degree, these fellows have found much too easy an access. Particularly at the several public places (I might have
said

said gaming places) in this kingdom, too little care is taken to prevent the promiscuous union of company; and sharpers of the lowest kind have frequently there found admission to their superiors, upon no other pretence or merit than that of a laced coat, and with no other stock than that of assurance.

Some few of these fellows, by luckily falling in with an egregious bubble, some thoughtless young heir, or more commonly heiress, have succeeded in a manner, which, if it may give some encouragement to others to imitate them, should, at the same time, as strongly admonish all gentlemen and ladies to be cautious with whom they mix in public places, and to avoid the sharper as they would a pest. But much the greater part of such adventurers have met with a more probable and more deserved fate; and having exhausted their little fund in their attempts, have been reduced to a dilemma, in which it required more judgment and resolution than are the property of many men, and more true sense of honour than belongs to any debauched mind, to extricate themselves by honest means. The only means, indeed, of this kind, are to quit their assumed station, and to return to that calling, however mean and laborious, to which they were born and bred.

But, besides that the way to this is often obstructed with almost insuperable difficulties; and false shame, at its very entrance, dashes them in the face; how easily are they dissuaded from such disagreeable thoughts, by the temptations with which fortune allures them, of a possibility, at least, of still supporting their false appearances, and of retrieving all their former hopes? How greedily, may we imagine, this enchanting alternative will be embraced by every bold mind, in such circumstances? for what but the danger of the undertaking can deter one, who hath nothing of a gentleman but his dress, to attain which he hath already divested himself of all sense of honesty? How easy is the transition from fraud to force? from a gamester to a rogue? perhaps, indeed, it is civil to suppose it any transition at all.

From this source, therefore, several of our most notable highwaymen have proceeded; and this hath likewise been the source of many other depredations on the honest part of mankind. So mischievous have been this kind of sharpers in society, that they have fallen under the particular notice of the legislature: for a statute in the reign of queen Anne, reciting, 'That divers lewd and dissolute persons live at great expences, having no visible estate, profession, or calling, to maintain themselves, but support those expences by gaming only;' enacts, 'That any two justices of the peace may cause to be brought before them all persons, within their respective limits, whom they shall have just cause to suspect to have no visible estate, profession, or calling, to maintain themselves by, but do, for the most part, support themselves by gaming; and if such persons shall not make the contrary appear to such justices, they are to be bound to their good behaviour for a twelvemonth; and, in default of sufficient security, to be committed till they can find such security; which security (in case they give it) is to be forfeited on their playing or betting at any one time for more than the value of 20*s*. [d].'

As to gaming in the lower classes of life, so plainly tending to the ruin of tradesmen, the destruction of youth, and to the multiplication of every kind of

[d] 9 Annæ, chap. xiv. sect. 6, 7. It would be of great service to the public, to extend this statute to idle persons and sharpers in general; for many support themselves by frauds, and cheating practices, even worse than gaming; and have the impudence to appear in the dress of gentlemen, and at public places, without having any pretensions of birth or fortune, or without any honest or visible means of livelihood whatever. Such a law would not be without a precedent; for such is the excellent institution mentioned by Herodotus, in his Euterpe.—'Amasis (says that historian) established a law in Egypt, that every Egyptian should annually declare before the governor of the province, by what means he maintained himself; and all those who did not appear, or who could not prove that they had some lawful livelihood, were punished by death. This law Solon introduced into Athens, where it was long inviolably preserved as a most just and equitable provision.' Herod. edit. Hudsoni, p. 158. This punishment is surely too severe; but the law, under a milder penalty, is well worthy to be adopted.

fraud

fraud and violence, the legislature hath provided very wholesome laws [e].

By the 33d of Henry VIII. ' Every artificer, craftsman of any handycraft or occupation, husbandman, labourer, servant at husbandry, journeyman or servant of artificer, mariners, fisherman, watermen, or any serving men, are prohibited from playing at tables, dice, cards, &c. out of Christmas; and in Christmas are permitted to play only in their masters houses, or in his presence, under the penalty of 20s. And all manner of persons are prohibited from playing at any bowl or bowls, in any open place out of their garden or orchard, under the penalty of 6s. 8d.

' The conviction to be by action, information, bill, or otherwise, in any of the king's courts; one half of the penalty to the informer.

' Provided that servants may play at any times with their masters, or by their licence; and all persons, who have 100*l.* *per annum*, freehold, may give their servants, or others resorting to their houses, a licence to play within the precinct of their houses, gardens, or orchard.'

By this statute likewise, ' No person whatever, by himself, factor, deputy, servant, or other person, shall, for gain, keep, &c. any common house, alley, or place of bowling, coayting, clash-coyls, half-bowl, tennis, dicing-table, or carding, or any other manner of game, prohibited by any statute heretofore made, or any unlawful game invented or made, or any other new unlawful game hereafter to be invented or made: the penalty is 40*s.* *per day*, for keeping the house, &c. and 6*s.* 8*d.* for every person haunting and playing at such house. These penalties to be recovered, &c. as above.

[e] By a statute made in the reign of Edward IV. now repealed, playing at several games, therein mentioned, was punished by two years imprisonment, and the forfeiture of 10*l.* and the master of the house was to be imprisoned for three years, and to forfeit 20*l.* A great sum in those days!

And all leases of gaming-houses, alleys, &c. are made void at the election of the lessee.'

Farther by the said statute, 'Power is given to all justices of peace, mayors, or other head-officers, in every city, &c. to enter suspected houses and places, and to commit the keepers of the said houses, and the persons there haunting, resorting, and playing, to prison; and to keep them in prison, till the keepers have found sureties to enter into a recognizance to the king's use, no longer to keep such house, &c. and the persons there found, to be bound, by themselves, or with sureties, &c. at the discretion of the justice, &c. no more to haunt the said places, or play at any of the said games.'

And now, by the statute of George II. this last clause is enforced, by giving the justice the same power on the information of two persons, as he had before on view; and, by a more explicit power, to take sureties or not of the party, at his discretion.

Lastly, The statute of Henry VIII. enjoins the justices, &c. to make due search weekly, or once per month, at the farthest, under the penalty of forfeiting 40s. for every month, during their neglect.

Thus stands the law; by which it may appear, that the magistrate is armed with sufficient authority to destroy all gaming among the inferiour people; and that, without his neglect or connivance, no such nuisance can possibly exist.

And yet, perhaps, the fault may not so totally lie at his door; for the recognizance is a mere bugbear, unless the party who breaks it should be sued thereon; which, as it is attended with great expence, is never done; so that, though many have forfeited it, not a single example of an estreat hath been made within my remembrance.

Again, it were to be wished, that the statute of George II. had required no more than one witness to the information: for even one witness, as I have found by experience, is very difficult to be procured.

However, as the law now is, seeing that the general bent of the people opposes itself to this vice, it is certainly in a great measure within the magistrate's power

power to suppress it, and so to harrafs such as propose to find their account in it, that these would soon be discouraged from the undertaking; nor can I conclude without observing, that this hath been lately executed with great vigour within the liberty of Westminster.

There are, besides, several other provisions in our statute books against this destructive vice. By the statute of queen Anne [f], whoever cheats at play, forfeits five times the sum won by such cheating, shall be deemed infamous, and suffer such corporal punishment as in case of perjury. And whoever wins above 10*l.* at any one sitting, shall likewise forfeit five times the sum won. Going shares with the winner, and betting on his side, are, in both instances, within the act.

By the same act, all securities for money won at play are made void; and if a mortgage be made on such account, the mortgagee doth not only lose all benefit of it, but the mortgage immediately enures to the use of the next heir [g].

By this law, persons who have lost above 10*l.* and have actually paid it, may recover the same by action within three months; and if they do not sue for it within that time, any other person may [h]. And the defendant shall be liable to answer a bill for discovering such sum lost, upon oath.

By 18 George II [i] whoever wins or loses 10*l.* at play, or by betting at any one time, or 20*l.* within twenty-four hours, is liable to be indicted, and shall be fined five times the value of the money lost.

By 12 George II [k] the games of Pharaoh, the Ace of hearts, Bassiet, and Hazard, are declared to be lotteries; and all persons, who set up, maintain, and keep them, forfeit 200*l.* and all who play at them, forfeit 50*l.* The conviction to be before one justice of peace, by the oath of one witness, or confession of

[f] 9 Annæ, chap. xiv. by which the statute of 16 C. II. is enlarged and made more severe.

[g] Ibid. sect. 1.

[h] 9 Annæ, chap. ix. sect. 2.

[i] Chap. xxxiv.

[k] Chap. xxviii.

the party. And the justice neglecting his duty, forfeits 10*l*. *Note*, The prosecution against the keeper, &c. may be for a lottery, on the 8 George I, where the penalty is 500*l*.

The act of 18 George II includes the game of Roly-poly, or other prohibited game at cards or dice, within the penalties of the abovementioned.

I have given this short sketch of these several acts, partly for the use and encouragement of informers, and partly to insinuate to certain persons with what decency they can openly offend against such plain, such solemn laws, the severest of which many of themselves have, perhaps, been the makers of. How can they seriously answer, either to their honour or conscience, giving the pernicious example of a vice, from which, as the legislature justly says in the preamble to the 16th of Charles II, ‘ Many mischiefs
‘ and inconveniences do arise, and are daily found,
‘ in the encouraging of sundry idle and disorderly
‘ persons in their dishonest, lewd, and dissolute course
‘ of life : and to the circumventing, deceiving, counselling, and debauching, of many of the younger
‘ sort, both of the nobility and gentry and others, to
‘ the loss of their precious time, and the utter ruin of
‘ their estates and fortunes, and withdrawing them
‘ from noble and laudable employments and exercises !’ Will a nobleman, I ask, confess that he can employ his time in no better amusement ? or will he frankly own that he plays with any other view than that of amusement ? Lastly, what can a man, who sins in open defiance of the laws of his country, answer to the *vir bonus est quis* ? can he say,

Qui consulta patrum, qui leges juraque servat ?

Or can he apply that celebrated line,

Oderunt peccare boni virtutis honore,

to himself, who owes to his greatness, and not to his innocence, that he is not deterred from such vices—
Formidine pœnæ ?

S E C T. IV.

Of the Laws that relate to the PROVISION for the Poor.

HAVING now run through the several immediate consequences of a general luxury among the lower people, all which, as they tend to promote their distresses, may be reasonably supposed to put many of them of the bolder kind upon unlawful and violent means of relieving the mischief which such vices have brought upon them; I come now to a second cause of the evil, in the improper regulation of what is called the poor in this kingdom, arising, I think, partly from the abuse of some laws, and partly from the total neglect of others; and (if I may presume to say it) somewhat perhaps from a defect in the laws themselves.

It must be matter of astonishment to any man to reflect that in a country where the poor are, beyond all comparison, more liberally provided for than in any other part of the habitable globe, there should be found more beggars, more distressed and miserable objects, than are to be seen throughout all the states of Europe.

And yet, undoubted as this fact is, I am far from agreeing with Mr. Shaw [1], who says, 'There are few, if any, nations or countries where the poor are more neglected, or are in a more scandalous nasty condition than in England. Whether (says he) this is owing to that natural inbred cruelty, for which Englishmen are so much noted among foreigners, or to that medley of religions, which are so plentifully sown, and so carefully cherished, among us; who think it enough to take care of themselves, and take a secret pride and pleasure in the poverty and distresses of those of another persuasion,' &c.

That the poor are in a very nasty and scandalous condition is perhaps too true; but sure the general charge against the people of England, as well as the

[1] Vol. II. p. 1.

invidious aspersions on particular bodies of them, is highly unjust and groundless. Nor do I know that any nation hath ventured to fix this character of cruelty on us. Indeed our inhospitality to foreigners hath been sometimes remarked; but that we are cruel to one another is not, I believe, the common, I am sure it is not the true, opinion. Can a general neglect of the poor be justly charged on a nation in which the poor are provided for by a tax frequently equal to what is called the land-tax; and where there are such numerous instances of private donations, such numbers of hospitals, alms-houses, and charitable provisions of all kinds?

Nor can any such neglect be charged on the legislature; under whose inspection this branch of polity hath been almost continually from the days of queen Elizabeth to the present time. Infomuch, that Mr. Shaw himself enumerates no less than thirteen acts of parliament relating to the indigent and helpless poor.

If therefore there be still any deficiency in this respect, it must, I think, arise from one of the three causes abovementioned; that is, from some defect in the laws themselves, or from the perversion of these laws; or, lastly, from the neglect in their execution.

I will consider all these with some attention.

The 43d of Eliz. [m] enacts:

First, That the church-wardens of every parish, and two substantial house-holders at least, shall be yearly appointed to be overseers of the poor.

Secondly, That these overseers shall, with the consent of two justices of the peace, put out apprentices the children of poor people. And all married or unmarried persons, who have no means or trade to maintain themselves, shall be put to work.

Thirdly, That they shall raise by a parochial tax a convenient stock of flax, hemp, wool, thread, iron, and other ware and stuff, to set the poor to work.

[m] Chap. iii.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, That they shall, from the same tax, provide towards the necessary relief of the lame, impotent, old, blind, and others, being poor and not able to work.

Fifthly, That they shall, out of the same tax, put the children of poor persons apprentices.

That these provisions may all be executed, that act vested the overseers with the following powers; and enforced the executing of them by the following penalties.

I. The overseers are appointed to meet once at least every month in the church after divine service; there, says the act, to consider of some good course to be taken, and some meet order to be set down *in the premises*. And to do this they are enjoined by a penalty: for every one absenting himself from such meeting without a just excuse to be allowed by two justices of the peace, or being negligent in his office, or in the execution of the orders aforesaid, forfeits 20s.

And after the end of their year, and after other overseers nominated, they are within four days to make and yield up to two justices of the peace a true and perfect account of all sums of money by them received or assessed, and of such stores as shall be in their hands, or in the hands of the poor, to work, and of all other things concerning their office, &c. And if the church-wardens and overseers refuse to account, they are to be committed by two justices till they shall have made a true account.

II. The overseers and church-wardens, both present and subsequent, are empowered by warrant from two justices to levy all the monies assessed, and all arrearages of those who refuse to pay, by distress and sale of the refusers goods; and the subsequent overseers may, in the same manner, levy the money and stock in the hands of the precedent: and for want of distress, the party is to be committed by two justices, without bail, till the same be paid.

III. They have a power to compel the poor to work; and such as refuse or neglect, the justice may commit to the house of correction or common gaol.

IV. The

IV. The overseers may compel children to be apprentices, and may bind them where they shall see convenient; till the man-child shall attain the age of twenty-four, or the woman-child the age of twenty-one, or till the time of her marriage; the indenture to be as effectual to all purposes as the covenant of one of full age.

V. They have a power to contract with the lord of the manor [n]; and on any parcel of ground on the waste, to erect, at the general charge of the parish, convenient houses of dwelling for the impotent poor; and to place several inmates in the same cottage, notwithstanding the statute [o] of cottages.

VI. They can compel the father and grandfather, mother and grandmother, and children of every poor, old, blind, and impotent person, or of any other person not being able to work (provided such father, &c. be of sufficient ability) at their own charges to relieve and maintain such poor person in such manner, and after such rate, as shall be assessed by the sessions, under the penalty of 20s. for every month's omission.

VII. If no overseers be named, every justice within the division forfeits 5 l.

So far this statute of Elizabeth, by which the legislature may seem very fully to have provided, *First*, For the absolute relief of such poor as are by age or infirmity rendered unable to work; and, *Secondly*, For the employment of such as are able.

'The former of these,' says lord Hale in his discourse on this subject, 'seems to be a charity of more immediate exigence; but the latter (*viz.* the employment of the poor) is a charity of greater extent, and of very great and important consequence to the public wealth and peace of the kingdom, as also to the benefit and advantage of the poor.' 'And this,' as Mr. Shaw observes, 'would prevent the children of our poor being brought up in laziness and beggary, whereby beggary is entailed from generation to generation: this is certainly the greatest charity; for

[n] This must be done by consent and order of sessions.

[o] These cottages are never after to be applied to any other use.

' though

though he who gives to any in want, does well ;
 yet he who employs and educates the poor, so as to
 render them useful to the public, does better ; for
 that would be many hundred thousand pounds *per*
ann. benefit to this kingdom.'

Now the former of these provisions hath, perhaps, though in a very slovenly and inadequate manner, been partly carried into execution ; but the latter, I am afraid I may too boldly assert, hath been utterly neglected and disregarded. Surely this is a most scandalous perversion of the design of the legislature, which through the whole statute seems to have had the employment of the able poor chiefly under their consideration : for to this purpose only almost every power in it is established, and every clause very manifestly directed. To say the truth, as this law hath been perverted in the execution, it were, perhaps, to be wished it had never been made ; not because it is not our duty to relieve real objects of distress ; but because it is so much the duty of every man, and I may add, so much the inclination of most Englishmen, that it might have been safely left to private charity ; or a public provision might surely have been made for it in a much cheaper and more effectual manner.

To prove the abuse of this law, my lord Hale appeals to all the populous parishes in England (he might, I believe, have included some which are not over populous) ' Indeed, says he, there are rates made for the relief of the impotent poor ; and, it may be, the same relief is also given in a narrow measure unto some others that have great families, and upon this they live miserably, and at best from hand to mouth ; and if they cannot get work to make out their livelihood, they and their children set up a trade of begging at best ; but it is rare to see any provision of a stock in any parish for the relief of the poor ; and the reasons are principally these : 1. The generality of people that are able, are yet unwilling, to exceed the present necessary charge ; they do choose to live for an hour rather than project for the future ; and although possibly trebling their exhibition in one gross sum at the beginning

' ginning of the year, to raise a stock, might in all
 ' probability render their future yearly payments, for
 ' seven years together, less by half, or two thirds,
 ' than what must be without it; yet they had rather
 ' continue on their yearly payments, year after year,
 ' though it exhaust them in time, and make the poor
 ' nothing the better at the year's end. 2. Because
 ' those places, where there are most poor, consist for
 ' the most part of tradesmen, whose estates lie princi-
 ' pally in their stocks, which they will not endure to
 ' be searched into to make them contributory to raise
 ' any considerable stock for the poor, nor indeed so
 ' much as to the ordinary contributions: but they lay
 ' all the rates to the poor upon the rents of lands and
 ' houses, which alone, without the help of the stocks,
 ' are not able to raise a stock for the poor, although it
 ' is very plain that stocks are as well by law rateable
 ' as lands, both to the relief and raising a stock for
 ' the poor. 3. Because the church-wardens and over-
 ' seers, to whom this power is given, are inhabitants
 ' of the same parish, and are either unwilling to
 ' charge themselves or to displease their neighbours in
 ' charging more than they needs must towards the
 ' poor: and although it were to be wished and hoped
 ' that the justices of the peace would be forward to
 ' enforce them if they might, though it may concern
 ' them also in point of present profit; yet if they
 ' would do any thing herein, they are not empowered
 ' to compel the church-wardens and overseers to do
 ' it, who most certainly will never go about it to bur-
 ' den, as they think, themselves, and displease their
 ' neighbours, unless some compulsory power were not
 ' only lodged by law, but also executed by some that
 ' may have a power over them to enforce it; or to
 ' do it, if they do it either partially or too sparingly.
 ' 4. Because people do not consider the inconvenience
 ' that will in time grow to themselves by this neglect,
 ' and the benefit that would in a little time accrue to
 ' them by putting it in practice, if they would have
 ' but a little patience.'

To these I will add a fifth reason: because the
 church-wardens and overseers are too apt to consider
 their

their office as a matter of private emolument; to waste part of the money raised for the use of the poor in feasting and riot; and too often to pervert the power given them by the statute to foreign and sometimes to the very worst of purposes.

The above considerations bring my lord Hale to complain of some defects in the law itself; 'In which,' says he, 'there is no power from the justices of the peace, nor any superintendant power, to compel the raising of a stock where the church-wardens and overseers neglect it.'

'The act chargeth every parish apart, where it may be they are liable to do little towards it; neither would it be so effectual as if three, four, five, or more contiguous parishes did contribute towards the raising of a stock proportionably to their poor respectively.'

'There is no power for hiring or erecting a common house, or place, for their common work-house; which may be, in some respects, and upon some occasions, useful and necessary.'

As to the first of these, I do not find any alteration hath been made; nor if there was, might it possibly produce any desired effect. The consequence, as it appears, would be only making church-wardens of the justices of peace, which many of them are already, not highly to the satisfaction of their parishes; too much power vested in one man being too apt perhaps to beget envy.

The second and third do pretty near amount to one and the same defect; and this, I think, is at present totally removed. Indeed, in my lord Hale's own time, though probably after he had written this treatise, a work-house was erected in London under the powers given by the statute made in the 13 and 14 of [p] Charles II. and I believe with very good success.

Since that time, other corporations have followed the example, as the city of Bristol in the reign of

king William [q], and that of Worcester in the reign of queen Anne [r], and in other places.

And now by a late statute, made in the reign of king [s] George I. the power of erecting work-houses is made general over the kingdom.

Now either this method, proposed by lord Hale, is inadequate to the purpose; or this act of parliament hath been grossly perverted: for certain it is that the evil is not removed, if indeed it be lessened, by the erection of work-houses. Perhaps, indeed, one objection which my lord Hale makes to the statute of Eliz. may here recur, seeing that there is nothing compulsory, but all left to the will and direction of the inhabitants.

But in truth the method itself will never produce the desired effect, as the excellent Sir Josiah Child well observes [t],—‘It may be objected, says he, that this work (the provision for the poor) may as well be done in distinct parishes, if all parishes were obliged to build work-houses, and employ their poor therein, as Dorchester and some others have done with good success. I answer, that such attempts have been made in many places to my knowledge, with very good intents and strenuous endeavours; but all that I ever heard of proved vain and ineffectual.’ For the truth of which, I believe, we may appeal to common experience.

And, perhaps, no less ineffectual would be the scheme proposed by this worthy gentleman, though it seems to promise fairer than that of the learned chief justice; yet neither of them seem to strike at the root of the evil. Before I deliver any sentiments of my own, I shall briefly take a view of the many subsequent provisions with which the legislature have from time to time enforced and strengthened the foregoing statute of Elizabeth.

The power of putting out children [u] appren-

[q] 8 & 9 W. III. c. 30.

[r] 2 Annæ, c. viii.

[s] 9 George I. c. i.

[t] Essay on Trade, c. ii.

[u] See 7 Jac. I. c. iii. which directs the manner of putting out apprentices, in pursuance of any gifts made to corporations, &c. for that purpose.

justice is enforced by the 3d of [w] Charles I. which enacts, 'That all persons to whom the overseers shall bind children by virtue of the statute of Eliz. may receive and keep them as apprentices.' But there yet wanted, as lord Hale says, a *sufficient compulsion for persons to take them*; wherefore it is enacted, by 8 and 9 [x] Will. III. 'That all persons to whom apprentices are appointed to be bound by the overseers, with the consent of the justices, shall receive them, and execute the other part of the indenture, under the penalty of 10*l.* for refusing, to be recovered before two justices, on the oath of one of the church-wardens or overseers.'

The power of setting the poor to work is enlarged by [y] 3 Charles I. This act gives the church-wardens and overseers of the poor a power, with the consent of two justices, or of one, if no more justices shall be within their limits, to set up and occupy any trade for the setting the poor to work.

The power of relieving the impotent poor (*i. e.* of distributing the public money) the only one which hath much exercised the minds of the parish officers, the legislature seems to think rather wanted restraining than enlarging; accordingly, in the reign of king [z] William they made an act to limit the power of the officers in this respect. As the act contains the sense of parliament of the horrid abuse of the statute of Elizabeth, I will transcribe part of a paragraph from it *verbatim*.

'And whereas many inconveniencies do daily arise in cities, towns corporate, and parishes, where the inhabitants are very numerous, by reason of the unlimited power of the church-wardens and overseers of the poor, who do frequently, upon frivolous pretences (but chiefly for their own private ends) give relief to what persons and number they think fit, and such persons being entered into the collection bill, do become after that a great charge to the

[w] Chap. iv. sect. 22. p. 8. The same clause is in 21 Jac. c. xxviii. par. 33.

[x] Chap. xxx. sect. 6. [y] Chap. iv. sect. 22. *ubi supra*.

[z] 3 & 4 W. and M. c. xi. sect. 11.

' parish,

parish, notwithstanding the occasion or pretence of their collection oftentimes ceases, by which means the rates for the poor are daily increased, contrary to the true intent of a statute made in the 43d year of the reign of her majesty queen Elizabeth, intituled, *An act for the relief of the poor*; for remedying of which, the statute enacts, that for the future, a book shall be provided and kept in every parish (at the charge of the same parish) wherein the names of all persons receiving collection, &c. shall be registered, with the day and year of their first receiving it. This book to be yearly, or oftener, viewed by the parishioners, and the names of the persons who receive collection shall be called over, and the reason of the receiving it examined, and a new list made; and no other person is allowed to receive collection but by order of a justice of peace, &c. except in case of pestilential diseases or small-pox [a].

The 8th and 9th of the same king, reciting the fear of the legislature, *that the money raised only for the relief of such as are as well impotent as poor, should be misapplied and consumed by the idle, sturdy, and disorderly beggars*, Enacts that every person, his wife, children, &c. who shall receive relief from the parish, shall wear a badge marked with the letter P, &c. in default of which, a justice of peace may order the relief of such persons to be abridged, suspended, or withdrawn, or may commit them for twenty-one days to the house of correction, there to be kept to hard labour. And every church-warden or overseer, who relieves any one without such a badge, being convicted before one justice, forfeits 20s.

Whether the justices made an ill use of the power given them by the statute of the 3d and 4th of king William, I will not determine; but the parliament thought proper afterwards to abridge it; for by the 9th of [b] George I. the justices are forbidden 'to

[a] The same statute in another part charges the overseer, &c. with applying the poor's money to their own use.

[b] Chap. xxx. sect. 2.

' make any order for the relief of a poor person, 'till oath is first made of a reasonable cause; and that application hath been made to the parishioners at the vestry, or to two officers, and that relief hath been refused. Nor can the justice then give his order, 'till he hath summoned the overseers to shew cause why relief should not be given.'

By the same statute, ' Those persons to whom the justices order relief, are to be registered in the parish books, as long only as the cause of the relief continues. Nor shall any parish officer be allowed any money given to the unregistered poor, unless on the most emergent occasion. The penalty for charging such money to the parish account is 5*l*. The conviction is to be before two justices.'

Lastly, that the parish may in all possible cases be relieved from the burden of the poor, whereas the statute of Elizabeth obliges the father, mother, &c. and children, if able, to relieve their poor children and parents; so, by the 5th of George I. [c], it is provided, ' That where any wife or child shall be left by the husband or parents a charge to any parish, the church-wardens or overseers may, by the order of two justices, seize so much of the goods and chattels, and receive so much of the annual rents and profits of the lands and tenements of such husband or parent, as the justices shall order, towards the discharge of the parish; and the sessions may empower the church-wardens and overseers to dispose thereof, for the providing for the wife and bringing up the children, &c.'

Such is the law that relates immediately to the maintenance of the impotent poor; a law so very ample in its provision, so strongly fortified with enforcing powers, and so cautiously limited with all proper restraints, that, at first sight, it appears sufficiently adequate to every purpose for which it was intended; but experience hath convinced us of the contrary.

And here I am well aware of the delicate dilemma to which I may seem reduced; since how shall I pre-

[c] Chap. viii.

sume to suppose any defects in a law, which the legislature seems to have laboured with such incessant diligence? but I am not absolutely driven to this disagreeable necessity, as the fault may so fairly be imputed to the non-execution of the law; and indeed to the ill execution of the statute of Elizabeth, my lord chief justice Hale chiefly imputes the imperfect provision for the poor in his time.

Sir Josiah Child, it is true, speaks more boldly, and charges the defects on the laws themselves: one general position, however, which he lays down, *That there never was a good law made, that was not well executed*, is surely very questionable. So therefore must be his opinion, if founded on that maxim; and this opinion, perhaps, he would have changed, had he lived to see the latter constitutions on this head.

But whatever defects there may be in the laws, or in the execution of them, I much doubt whether either of these great men hath found the means of curing them. And this I am the more forward to say, as the legislature, by a total neglect of *both* their schemes, seem to give sufficient countenance to my assertion.

In a matter then of so much difficulty, as well as so great importance, how shall I venture to deliver my own opinion? such, indeed, is the difficulty and importance of this question, that Sir Josiah Child thinks, *If a whole session of parliament were employed on this single concern, it would be time spent as much to the glory of God, and good of this nation, as in any thing that noble and worthy patriots of their country can be engaged in.*

However, under the protection of the candid, and with deference to the learned reader, I will enter on this subject, in which, I think, I may with modesty say, I have had some experience; and in which I can with truth declare, I have employed no little time. If any gentleman, who hath had more experience, hath more duly considered the matter, or whose superior abilities enable him to form a better judgment, shall think proper to improve my endeavours, he hath my ready consent. Provided the

the end be effected, I shall be contented with the honour of my share (however inconsiderable) in the means. Nay, should my labours be attended only with neglect and contempt, I think I have learned (for I am a pretty good historian) to bear such misfortunes without much repining.

By THE POOR, then, I understand such persons as have no estate of their own to support them, without industry; nor any profession or trade, by which, with industry, they may be capable of gaining a comfortable subsistence.

This class of the people may be considered under these three divisions:

First, Such poor as are unable to work.

2dly, Such as are able and willing to work.

3dly, Such as are able to work, but not willing.

As to the *First* of these, they are but few. An utter incapacity to work must arise from some defect, occasioned either by nature or accident. Natural incapacities are generally the most (perhaps the only) considerable ones; for as to accidental maims, how very rarely do they happen! and, I must add, how very nobly are they provided for, when they do happen! Again, as to natural incapacities, they are but few, unless those two general circumstances, one of which must, and the other may befall, all men; I mean, the extremes of youth and age: for, besides these, the number of persons who really labour under an utter incapacity of work, will, on a just inspection, be found so trifling, that two of the London hospitals might contain them all. The reader will be pleased to observe, I say of those who *really labour*, &c. for he is much deceived, who computes the number of objects in the nation, from the great number which he daily sees in the streets of London; among whom I myself have discovered some notorious cheats; and my good friend Mr. Welch, the worthy high constable of Holborn division, many more. Nothing, as I have been well informed, is more common among these wretches, than for the lame, when provoked, to use their crutches as weapons instead of supporters; and for

the blind, if they should hear the beadle at their heels, to outrun the dogs which guided them before. As to diseases, to which human nature is universally liable, they sometimes (though very rarely; for health is the happy portion of poverty) befall the poor; and at all such times they are certainly objects of charity, and entitled, by the law of God, to relief from the rich.

Upon the whole, this first class of the poor is so truly inconsiderable in number, and to provide for them in the most ample and liberal manner would be so very easy to the public; to support and cherish them, and to relieve their wants, is a duty so positively commanded by our Saviour, and is withal so agreeable and delightful in itself, affording the most desirable object to the strong passion of pity; nay, and in the opinion of some, to pride and vanity also; that, I am firmly persuaded, it might be safely left to voluntary charity, unenforced by any compulsive law. And if any man will profess so little knowledge of human nature, and so mean and unjust an opinion of the christianity, I might say the humanity, of this country, as to affect a contrary opinion, notwithstanding all I have said, let him answer the following instance, which may be called an argument *à posteriori*, for the truth of my assertion. Such, I think, is the present bounty to beggars; for, at a time when every man knows the vast tax which is raised for the support of the poor, and when all men of property must feel their contributions to this tax, mankind are so forward to relieve the appearance of distress in their fellow-creatures, that every beggar, who can but moderately well personate misery, is sure to find relief and encouragement; and this, though the giver must have great reason to doubt the reality of the distress, and when he can scarce be ignorant that his bounty is illegal [d], and that he is encouraging a nuisance. What

[d] This was forbidden by many statutes; and by the act of Henry VIII. every person giving any money in alms, but to the common boxes and common gatherings in every parish, forfeits twelve times as much as he gives.

then must be the case, when there should be no such tax, nor any such contribution; and when, by relieving a known and certain object of charity, every good man must be assured, that he is not only doing an act which the law allows, but which christianity and humanity too exact of him?

However, if there be any person who is yet unwilling to trust the poor to voluntary charity; or if it should be objected, that there is no reason to lay the whole burden on the worthier part of mankind, and to excuse the covetous rich; and that a tax is therefore necessary to force open the purses of these latter; let there be a tax then, and a very inconsiderable one would effectually supply the purpose [e].

I come now to consider the *second* class. These are in reason, though not in fact, equally objects of the regard of the compassionate man, and much more worthy the care of the politician; and yet, without his care, they will be in a much worse condition than the others: for they have none of those incitements of pity which fill the pockets of the artful beggar, and procure relief for the blind, the lame, and other visible objects of compassion: such therefore, without a law, and without an honest and sensible execution of that law, must languish under, and often perish with, want. A melancholy and dreadful reflexion! and the more so, as they are capable of being made not only happy in themselves, but highly useful to the service of the community.

To provide for these, seems, as I have said, to have been the chief design of the statute of Elizabeth, as well as of several laws enacted since; and that this design hath hitherto failed, may possibly have arisen from one single mistake; but a mistake which must be fatal, as it is an error in the first conception. The mistake I point at is, that the legisla-

[e] The reader is desired to consider the author here as speaking only of the impotent poor; and as hoping that some effectual means may be found out of procuring work, and consequently maintenance, for the able and industrious.

ture have left the whole work to the overseers. They have rather told them what they are to do (*viz.* to employ the industrious poor) than how they shall do it. It is true, the original act directs them, by a parochial tax, to raise a convenient stock of flax, hemp, wool, thread, iron, and other ware and stuff, to set the poor to work; a direction so general and imperfect, that it can be no wonder, considering what sort of men the overseers of the poor have been, that it should never have been carried into execution.

To say the truth, this affair of finding an universal employment for the industrious poor, is of great difficulty, and requires talents not very bountifully scattered by nature among the whole human species. And yet, difficult as it is, it is not, I hope, impracticable, seeing that it is of such infinite concern to the good of the community. Hands for the work are already supposed; and surely trade and manufacture are not come to so low an ebb, that we should not be able to find work for the hands. The method of adapting only seems to be wanting. And though this may not be easy to discover, it is a task surely not above the reach of the British parliament, when they shall think proper to apply themselves to it.

Nor will it, I hope, be construed presumption in me to say, that I have myself thought of a plan for this purpose, which I am ready to produce, when I shall have any reason to see the least glimpse of hope, that my labour in drawing it out at length would not be absolutely and certainly thrown away.

The last, and much the most numerous class of poor, are those who are able to work, and not willing. This likewise hath fallen under the eye of the legislature, and provisions have been made concerning it; which, if in themselves efficacious, have at least failed of producing any good effect, from a total neglect in the execution.

By the 43 Eliz. the church-wardens and overseers, or greater part of them, with the consent of two justices, shall take order for the setting to work the children of all such parents as they shall think not
able

able to maintain them; as also, all such married or unmarried persons, as shall have no means to maintain themselves, nor any ordinary trade or calling whereby to get their living.

Besides this power of compelling the poor to work, the legislature hath likewise compelled them to become, 1. Apprentices, and, 2. Servants. We have already seen the power of the overseers, with the assistance of the justices, to put poor children apprentices; and likewise to oblige their masters to receive them. And long before, a compulsion was enacted [f] on poor persons to become apprentices; so that any householder, having and using half a ploughland in tillage, may compel any poor person, under twenty-one and unmarried, to serve as an apprentice in husbandry, or in any other kind of art, mystery, or science (before expressed in the act [g]: and if such person, being so required, refuse to become an apprentice, one justice of peace may compel him, or commit him to prison, there to remain till he will be bound.

2dly, The poor are obliged to become servants.

By the 5th of Eliz. [b] it is enacted, ' That every person being unmarried, and every other person under the age of thirty, who hath been brought up in any of the sciences, &c. of clothiers, woollen cloth weavers, tuckers, fullers, clothworkers, shear-men, dyers, hosiers, taylors, shoe-makers, tanners, pewterers, bakers, brewers, glovers, cutlers, smiths, farriers, curriers, saddlers, spurriers, turners, tappers, hat-makers or felt-makers, butchers, cooks, or millers, or who hath exercised any of these trades by the space of three years or more; and not having in lands, rents, &c. an estate of 40s. clear yearly value, freehold, nor being worth in goods 10l. and so allowed by two justices of the country where he hath most commonly inhabited, or by the mayor, &c. nor being retained with any person in husbandry, nor retained in any of the

[f] 5 Eliz. c. iv. sect. 35.

[b] Chap. iv. sect. 4.

[g] *Viz.* Every trade then used.

* above sciences, or in any other art or science; nor
 * lawfully retained in household, or in any office, with
 * any nobleman, gentleman, or others: nor having a
 * convenient farm, or other holding, in tillage,
 * whereupon he may lawfully employ his labour;
 * during the time that he shall continue unmarried, or
 * under the age of thirty, upon request made by any
 * person using the art or mystery wherein the person
 * so required hath been exercised as aforesaid, shall
 * be retained.

* And every person between the age of twelve and
 * sixty, not being lawfully retained in the several
 * services mentioned in the statute [i], nor being a
 * gentleman born, or a scholar in either university, or
 * in any school, nor having an estate of freehold of
 * 40*s. per annum* value, nor being worth in goods
 * 10*l.* nor being heir to 10*l. per annum*, or 40*l.*
 * in goods; nor being a necessary or convenient ser-
 * vant lawfully retained; nor having a convenient
 * farm or holding, nor otherwise lawfully retained;
 * shall be compelled to be retained to serve in hus-
 * bandry, by the year, with any person using hus-
 * bandry within the same shire.

* Every such person refusing to serve upon request,
 * or covenanting to serve and not serving, or de-
 * parting from his service before the end of his term,
 * unless for some reasonable cause to be allowed be-
 * fore a justice of the peace, mayor, &c. or depart-
 * ing at the end of his term without a quarter's warn-
 * ing given before two witnesses, may be committed
 * by two justices of the peace to prison, there to re-
 * main without bail or mainprize, till he shall be-
 * come bound to his master, &c. to serve, &c. [k].

* Nor shall any master, in any of the arts and
 * sciences aforesaid, retain a servant for less than a
 * year [l]; nor shall any master put away a servant
 * retained by this act within his term, nor at the end
 * of the term without a quarter's warning, under
 * the penalty of 40*s* [m].

[i] Chap. iv. sect. 7.

[l] Ib. sect. 3.

[k] Ib. sect. 5, 6, 9.

[m] Ib. sect. 5, 6, 8.

' Artificers, &c. are compellable by a justice of the peace, or the constable or other head-officer of a township, to serve in the time of hay or corn harvest. The penalty of disobedience is imprisonment in the stocks by the space of two days and one night [n].

' Women, between the age of twelve and forty, may be obliged, by two justices, to enter into service by the year, week, or day; or may be committed *quousque* [o].

The legislature, having thus appointed what persons shall serve, have gone farther, and have directed a method of ascertaining how they shall serve: for which use principally is that excellent constitution of Elizabeth [p], ' That the justices of the peace, with the sheriff of the county, if he conveniently may, the mayor, &c. in towns corporate, shall yearly, within six weeks of Easter, assemble together, and, with the assistance of such discreet persons as they shall think proper to call to them, and respecting the plenty or scarcity of the time, and other circumstances, shall, within the limits of their commission, rate and appoint the wages of artificers, labourers, &c. by the year, month, week, or day, with or without meat and drink.' Then the statute enumerates several particulars, in the most explicit manner, and concludes with these general words, ' And for any other kind of reasonable labour and service.'

' These rates are appointed to be engrossed in parchment, and certified into chancery, before the 12th day of July; and before the first day of September, several printed proclamations, containing the rates, and a command to all persons to observe them, are to be sent to the sheriff and justices, and to the mayor, &c. These proclamations are to be entered of record with the clerk of the peace, to be fixed up in the market-towns, and to be publicly proclaimed in all the markets till Michaelmas [q].

[n] Chap. iv. sect. 28.

[p] Ib. sect. 15.

[o] Ib. sect. 24.

[q] Ib. iv. sect. 16.

‘ And if any person, after the said proclamations shall be sent down and published, shall, by any secret ways or means, directly or indirectly retain or keep any servant, workman, or labourer, or shall give any greater wages, or other commodity, contrary to the true intent of the statute, or contrary to the rates assessed, he shall forfeit 5*l.* and be imprisoned by the space of ten days [*r*].’

‘ And every person who is retained, or takes any wages, contrary to the statute, shall be imprisoned twenty-one days [*s*]. And every such retainer, promise, gift and payment, or writing and bond for that purpose, are made absolutely void.

‘ Every justice of peace, or chief officer, who shall be absent at the rating of wages, unless the justices shall allow the reasonable cause of his absence, forfeits 10*l.* [*t*].’

That this statute may, from time to time, be carefully and diligently put in execution, ‘ The justices are appointed to meet twice a year, to make a special and diligent enquiry of the branches and articles of this statute, and of the good execution of the same, and severely to correct and punish any defaults: for which service they are allowed 5*s.* per day [*u*].’ No inconsiderable allowance at that time!

But all this care of the legislature proved, it seems, ineffectual; for, forty years after the making this statute, we find the parliament complaining, ‘ That the said act had not, according to the true meaning thereof, been duly put in execution; and that the rates of wages for poor artificers, labourers, and other persons, had not been rated and proportioned according to the politic intention of the said act [*w*].’ A neglect which seems to have been occasioned by some doubts raised in Westminster-hall, concerning the persons who were the subjects of this law. For the clearing therefore any such doubt,

[*r*] Chap. iv. sect. 18.

[*s*] Ib. sect. 17.

[*w*] Preamble to 1 Jac. c. vi.

[*t*] Ib. sect. 19, 20.

[*u*] Ib. sect. 37, 38.

this subsequent statute gives the justices an express power 'to rate the wages of any labourers, weavers, spinsters, and workmen or workwomen whatsoever, either working by the day, week, month, year, or taking any work at any person's hands whatsoever, to be done by the great, or otherwise [x].'

And to render the execution of this law the more easy, the statute of James I. enacts, 1. 'That in all counties where general sessions are kept in several divisions, the rating wages at such respective general sessions shall be as effectual within the division, as if they had been rated at the grand general session [y].'

2. The method of certifying the rates in chancery appearing, I apprehend, too troublesome and tedious, such certificate is made no longer necessary, but the rates being assessed and engrossed in parchment, under the hands and seals of the justices, the sheriff, or chief officer of towns corporate, may immediately proclaim the same [z].'

And whereas wool is the great staple commodity of this kingdom, and the woollen trade its principal manufacture, the parliament have given particular attention to the wages of artificers in this trade.

For, 1. By the statute of James I. [a], 'No clothier, being a justice of peace in any precinct or liberty, shall be rater of wages for any artizan depending upon the making of cloth.'

2. 'Clothiers, not paying so much wages to their workmen or workwomen, as are rated by the justices, forfeit 10s. for every offence [b].'

3. By a late statute [c], 'All persons, anywise concerned in employing any labourers in the woollen manufactory, are required to pay the full wages or price agreed on, in money, and not in goods, truck, or otherwise; nor shall they make any deduction from such wages or price, on account of any goods sold or delivered previous to such agreement. And all such wages are to be levied, on conviction, be-

[x] 1 Jac. sect. 3.

[y] 1b. sect. 5.

[z] 1b. sect. 6.

[a] 1b. sect. 7.

[b] 1b. sect. 7.

[c] 12 Geo. I. cap. xxxiv. sect. 3.

‘ fore two justices, by distress; and, for want of
 ‘ distress, the party is to be committed for six months,
 ‘ or until full satisfaction is made to the party com-
 ‘ plaining. Besides which, the clothier forfeits the
 ‘ sum of 100*l*. [d].’

4. By the same statute, ‘ All contracts, by-laws,
 ‘ &c. made in unlawful clubs, by persons brought up
 ‘ in, or exercising the art of, a wool-comber or wea-
 ‘ ver, for regulating the said trade, settling the prices
 ‘ of goods, advancing wages, or lessening the hours
 ‘ of work, are declared to be illegal, and void; and
 ‘ any person concerned in the woollen manufactures,
 ‘ who shall knowingly be concerned in such contract,
 ‘ by-law, &c. or shall attempt to put it in execution,
 ‘ shall, upon conviction before two justices, suffer
 ‘ three months imprisonment [e].’

But long before this act, a general law was made [f], to punish all conspiracies for raising wages, limiting hours of work, &c. among artificers, workmen, and labourers; and if such conspiracy was to extend to a general advance of wages all over the kingdom, any insurrection of a number of persons, in consequence of it, would be an overt act of high treason.

From this cursory view it appears, I think, that no blame lies at the door of the legislature, which hath not only given the magistrate, but even private persons, with his assistance, a power of compelling the poor to work; and *zadly*, hath allotted the fullest powers, and prescribed the most effectual means, for ascertaining and limiting the price of their labour.

But so very faulty and remiss hath been the execution of these laws, that an incredulous reader may almost doubt whether there are really any such existing; particularly as to that which relates to the rating the wages of labourers; a law which at first, it seems, was too carelessly executed, and which hath since grown into utter neglect and disuse.

Hath this total disuse arisen, in common with the neglect of other wholesome provisions, for want of

[d] 12 Geo. I. c. xxxiv. sect. 4.

[e] *Ib.* sect. 1,

[f] 2 and 3 E. VI. c. xv.

due attention to the public good? or is the execution of this law attended with any extraordinary difficulty? or, lastly, are we really grown, as Sir Josiah Child says, wiser than our forefathers, and have discovered any fault in the constitution itself; and that to retrench the price of labour by a law is an error in policy?

This last seems to me, I own, to be very strange doctrine, and somewhat of a paradox in politics; however, as it is the sentiment of a truly wise and great man, it deserves a fair discussion. Such I will endeavour to give it; since no man is more inclined to respect the opinions of such persons; and as the revival of the law, which he opposes, is, I think, absolutely necessary to the purpose I am contending for.

I will give the passage from Sir Josiah at length. It is in answer to this position, *That the dearthness of wages spoils the English trade.* 'Here, says he, the author propounds the making a law to retrench the hire of poor mens labour (an honest charitable project, and well becoming an usurer!) the answer to this is easy. *First*, I affirm, and can prove, he is mistaken in fact; for the Dutch, with whom we principally contend in trade, give generally more wages to all their manufacturers, by at least twopence in the shilling, than the English. *Secondly*, Wherever wages are high, universally throughout the whole world, 'tis an infallible evidence of the riches of that country; and wherever wages for labour run low, it is a proof of the poverty of that place. *Thirdly*, It is multitudes of people, and good laws, such as cause an encrease of people, which principally enrich any country; and if we retrench by law the labour of our people, we drive them from us to other countries that give better rates; and so the Dutch have drained us of our seamen and woollen manufacturers, and we the French of their artificers and silk manufacturers; and many more we should, if our laws otherwise gave them fitting encouragement; of which more in due place. *Fourthly*, If any particular trades

exact

' exact more here than in Holland, they are only
 ' such as do it by virtue of incorporations, privileges,
 ' and charters, of which the cure is easy, by an act
 ' of naturalization, and without compulsory laws.
 ' It is true, our great grandfathers did exercise such
 ' policy, of endeavouring to retrench the price of la-
 ' bour by a law (although they could never effect it).
 ' but that was before trade was introduced into this
 ' kingdom; we are since, with the rest of the trading
 ' world, grown wiser in this matter; and, I hope, shall
 ' so continue [g].

To this I reply, 1. That the making such a law is
 not only an honest, but a charitable project; as it
 proposes, by retrenching the price of poor mens la-
 bour, to provide labour, and consequently hire, for
 all the poor who are capable of labour. In all manu-
 factures whatever, the lower the price of labour is,
 the cheaper will be the price to the consumer; and
 the cheaper this price is, the greater will be the con-
 sumption; and consequently the more hands em-
 ployed. This is likewise a very charitable law to the
 poor farmer, and never more necessary than at this
 day, when the rents of lands are rated to the highest
 degree. The great hopes which the farmer hath (in-
 deed his common relief from ruin) is of an exportation
 of corn. This exportation cannot be by law, unless
 when the corn is under such a particular price. How
 necessary then is it to him, that the price of labour
 should be confined within moderate bounds, that the
 exportation of corn, which is of such general advan-
 tage to the kingdom, should turn, in any considera-
 ble manner, to his private profit! and what reason is
 there to imagine, that this power of limiting wages
 should be executed in any dishonest or uncharitable
 manner? is it not a power entrusted to all the justices
 of the county, or division, and to the sheriff, with
 the assistance of grave, sober, and substantial persons,
 who must be sufficient judges of the matter, and who
 are directed to have regard to the plenty and scarcity
 of the times? is it to be suspected, that many persons

of this kind should unite in a cruel and flagitious act, by which they would be liable to the condemnation of their own consciences, to the curses of the poor, and to be reproached by the example of all their neighbouring counties? are not much grosser exorbitancies to be feared on the other side, when the lowest artificers, husbandmen, and labourers, are made judges in their own cause; and when it is left to their own discretion, to exact what price they please for their labour, of the poor farmer or clothier; of whom if they cannot exact an extravagant price, they will fly to that alternative, which idleness often prefers, of begging or stealing? *Lastly*, Such a restraint is very wholesome to the poor labourers themselves; of whom Sir Josiah observes [b], 'That they live better in the dearest countries for provisions than in the cheapest, and better in a dear year than in a cheap, especially in relation to the public good; for, in a cheap year, they will not work above two days in a week; their humour being such that they will not provide for a hard time, but just work so much, and no more, as may maintain them in that mean condition to which they have been accustomed.' Is it not therefore, upon this concession, demonstrable, that the poor man himself will live much better (his family certainly will) by these means? again, many of the poor, and those the more honest and industrious, will probably gain by such a law: for, at the same time that the impudent and idle, if left to themselves, will certainly exact on their masters; the modest, the humble, and truly laborious, may often (and so I doubt not but the case is) be oppressed for them, and forced to accept a lower price for their labour, than the liberality of gentlemen would allow them.

zally, The two assertions contained in the next paragraph both seem to me suspicious. First, That the Dutch and other nations have done all that in them lies, to draw from us our seamen, and some of our manufacturers, is certainly true; and this they would do at any price: but that the Dutch do in general

[b] Discourse on Trade.

give more wages to their manufacturers than the English, is, I believe, not the fact. Of the manufactures of Holland, the only considerable article which we ourselves take of them, except linen, are toys; and to this we are induced, not because the Dutch are superior to our workmen in genius and dexterity (points in which they are not greatly celebrated) but because they work much cheaper. Nor is, *2dly*, 'The immediate transition from trade to manufacture altogether so fair. The Dutch, it is true, are principally our rivals in trade in general, and chiefly as carriers; but not so in manufacture, particularly in the woollen manufacture. Here our chief rivals are the French, amongst whom the price of labour is known to be considerably lower than with us. To this, amongst other causes (for I know there are others, and some very scandalous ones), they owe their success over us in the Levant. It is indeed a truth, which needs no comment nor proof, that where goods are of equal value, the man who sells cheapest will have the most custom; and it is as certainly true, that he who makes up his goods in the cheapest manner, can sell them so.

3dly, Sir Josiah asserts, 'That wherever wages are high, universally throughout the world, 'tis an infallible evidence of the riches of that country; and wherever wages for labour run low, it is a proof of the poverty of that place.—If this be true, the concession will do him no service; for it will not prove, that to give high wages is the way to grow rich; since it is much more probable, that riches should cause the advance of wages, than that high wages should produce riches. This latter, I am sure, would appear a high solecism in private life; and, I believe, it is no less so in public.

4thly, His next assertion, *That to retrench by law the labour of our people, is to drive them from us*, hath partly received an answer already. To give this argument any force, our wages must be reduced at least below the standard of other countries; which is, I think, very little to be apprehended; but, on the contrary, if the labourer should carry his demands ever

so little higher, as may be reasonably expected, the consumption of many manufactures will not only be confined to our own people, but to a very few of those people.

Thus, I hope, I have given a full answer to this great man, whom I cannot dismiss, without observing a manifest mistake of the question, which runs through all his arguments; all that he advances concluding, indeed, only to the *quantum* of wages which shall be given for labour. He seems rather to argue against giving too little, than against regulating what is to be given; so that his arguments are more proper for the consideration of the justices at their meeting for settling the rates of wages, than for the consideration of the legislature, in a debate concerning the expediency of the above law. To evince the expediency of which, I appeal to the concurrent sense of parliament in so many different ages; for this is not only testified expressly in the above statute of Elizabeth and James, but may be fairly implied from those of Edward VI. and George I. above recited.

I have moreover, I think, demonstrated, 1. The equity of this law; and that it is as much for the service of the labourer as of his master. 2. The utility of it to trade: I shall only add the necessity of it, in order to execute the intention of the legislature, in compelling the idle to work; for is it not the same thing to have the liberty of working or not at your own pleasure, and to have the absolute nomination of the price at which you will work? the idleness of the common people in this town is, indeed, greatly to be attributed to this liberty; most of these, if they cannot exact an exorbitant price for their labour, will remain idle. The habit of exacting on their superiors is grown universal; and the very porters expect to receive more for their work than the salaries of above half the officers of the army amount to.

I conclude then, that this law is necessary to be revived (perhaps with some enlargements) and that still upon one account more; which is, to enable the magistrate clearly to distinguish the corrigible from the incorrigible in idleness: for when the price of labour

is once established, all those poor who shall refuse to labour at that price, even at the command of a magistrate, may properly be deemed incorrigibly idle.

For these the legislature have, by several acts of parliament, provided a punishment, by commitment to Bridewell either for more or less time: and a very severe punishment this is, if being confirmed in habits of idleness, and in every other vicious habit, may be esteemed so.

These houses are commonly called houses of correction, and the legislature intended them certainly for places of correction of idleness at least: for in many acts, where persons are ordered to be committed to Bridewell, it is added *There to be kept to hard labour*; nay, in the statute of Jac. I. [i] these houses of correction are directed ‘to be built with a convenient backside adjoining, together with mills, turns, cards, and such like necessary implements, to set rogues and other idle people on work.’ Again, in the same statute, authority is given to the master or governor, ‘To set to work such rogues, vagabonds, idle and disorderly persons, as shall be brought or sent unto the said house (being able) while they shall continue in the said house; and to punish them, by putting fetters on them and by whipping; nor are the said rogues, &c. to have any other provision than what they shall earn by their labour.’

The erection of these houses, as is usual with new institutions, did at first greatly answer the good purposes for which they were designed, insomuch that my lord Coke observes, ‘That upon the making of the statute 39 Eliz. for the erection of houses of correction, and a good space after, whilst justices of peace and other officers were diligent and industrious, there was not a rogue to be seen in any part of England.’ And again he prophesies, that, ‘from the erection

[i] Chap. iv. These houses were first begun to be erected Ann. 13 Eliz. the prison for idleness being, before that time, the stocks. In the 11th year of Henry VII. vagabonds, beggars, &c. are ordered to be set three days and three nights in the stocks.

' of these houses we shall have neither beggar nor idle person in the commonwealth [4].'

But this great man was a much better lawyer than he was a prophet; for whatever these houses were designed to be, or whatever they at first were, the fact is, that they are at present, in general, no other than schools of vice, seminaries of idleness, and common-shores of nastiness and disease. As to the power of whipping, which the act of James I. vests in the governor, that, I believe, is very seldom used; and, perhaps, when it is, not properly applied. And the justice in very few instances (in none of idleness) hath any power of ordering such punishment [1].

And with regard to work, the intention of the law is, I apprehend, as totally frustrated. Insomuch that they must be very lazy persons indeed who can esteem the labour imposed in any of these houses as a punishment. In some, I am told, there is not any provision made for work. In that of Middlesex in particular, the governor hath confessed to me that he hath had no work to employ his prisoners; and hath urged as a reason, that having generally great numbers of most desperate felons under his charge, who, notwithstanding his utmost care, will sometimes get access to his other prisoners, he dares not trust those who are committed to hard labour with any heavy or sharp instruments of work, lest they should be converted into weapons by the felons.

What good consequence then can arise from sending idle and disorderly persons to a place where they are neither to be corrected nor employed; and where, with the conversation of many as bad, and sometimes worse than themselves, they are sure to be improved in the knowledge, and confirmed in the practice, of iniquity? can it be conceived that such persons will not come out of these house much more idle and disorderly than they went in? the truth of this I have often experienced in the behaviour of the wretches

[1] 2 Just. 729. [4] By the last vagabond act, which repeals all the former, rogues and vagabonds are to be whipt, or sent to the house of correction.

brought before me ; the most impudent and flagitious of whom have always been such as have been before acquainted with the discipline of Bridewell : a commitment to which place, though it often causes great horror and lamentation in the novice, is usually treated with ridicule and contempt by those who have already been there.

For this reason, I believe, many of the worthiest magistrates have, to the utmost of their power, declined a rigorous execution of the laws for the punishment of idleness ; thinking that a severe reprimand might more probably work the conversion of such persons than the committing them to Bridewell. This I am sure may, with great certainty, be concluded, that the milder method is less liable to render what is bad worse, and to complete the destruction of the offender.

But this is a way of acting, however worthy be the motive, which is sometimes more justifiable to a man's own conscience, than it would be in the Court of King's Bench, which requires the magistrate to execute the laws entrusted to his care, and in the manner which those laws prescribe. And besides the indecency of shewing a disregard to the laws in being, nothing surely can be more improper than to suffer the idleness of the poor, the cause of so much evil to the society, to go entirely unpunished.

And yet, should the magistrate do his duty as he is required, will the intent and purpose of the legislature be answered ? The parliament was, indeed, too wise to punish idleness barely by confinement. Labour is the true and proper punishment of idleness, for the same reason which the excellent Dr. Swift gives why death is the proper punishment of cowardice. Where then is the remedy ? is it to enforce the execution of the law as it now stands, and to reform the present conduct of the several Bridewells ? this would, I believe, be as difficult a work as the cleansing of the Augean stables of old ; and would require as extraordinary a degree of political as that did of natural strength, to accomplish it. In truth, the case here is the same as with the overseers before ; the trust is too

great

great for the persons on whom it devolves: and though these houses are, in some measure, under the inspection of the justices of peace, yet this in the statute is recommended in too general a manner to their care, to expect any good fruits from it. As 'to the true and faithful account which they are to yield to the justices, at the sessions, of the persons in their custody,' this is at present little more than matter of form; nor can it be expected to be any other in the hurry of a public sessions, and when the stench arising from the prisoners is so intolerable that it is difficult to get any gentlemen to attend the court at that time. In the last vagrant act, indeed, two justices are appointed, twice or oftener, every year, to examine into the state and nature of houses of correction, &c. yet, as it gives them no power but of reporting to the sessions, I believe hath not produced any good effect: for the business of the sessions is so complicated and various, that it happens, as in all cases where men have too much to do, that they do little or nothing effectually. Perhaps, indeed, if two or more justices of the peace were appointed to meet once every month at some convenient place, as near as possible to the Bridewell, there to summon the governor before them, to examine the accounts of his stock and implements for work, and to make such orders (under what restrictions the parliament shall think proper) as to such justices shall seem requisite; this might afford a palliative at least. In short, the great cure for idleness is labour; and this is its only proper punishment; nor should it ever be in the power of the idle person to commute this punishment for any other.

In the reign of [m] Edward VI. a most severe law, indeed, was made for the punishment of idleness.—
 'If any person (says the Statute) shall bring to two justices of peace any runagate servant, or any other, which liveth idly and loiteringly by the space of three days, the said justices shall cause the said idle and loitering servant or vagabond to be marked with an hot iron on the breast with the letter V, and adjudge

' him to be slave to the same person that brought
 ' and presented him, to have to him, his executors
 ' and assigns, for two years, who shall take the said
 ' slave, and give him bread, water, or small drink,
 ' and refuse meat, and cause him to work, by beating,
 ' chaining, or otherwise, in such work and labour as
 ' he shall put him, be it never so vile. And if such
 ' slave absent himself from his master within the term,
 ' by the space of fourteen days, he shall be adjudged
 ' by two justices of the peace to be marked on the
 ' forehead, or the ball of the cheek, with a hot iron,
 ' with the sign of an S, and shall be adjudged to be
 ' slave to his said master for ever; and, if the said slave
 ' shall run away a second time, he shall be adjudged
 ' a felon.'

This statute lived no longer than two years, indeed
 it deserved no longer a date? for it was cruel, un-
 constitutional, and rather resembling the cruel temper
 of a Draco, than the mild spirit of the English law.
 But, *est modus*: there is a difference between making
 men slaves, and felons, and compelling them to be
 subjects; in short, between throwing the reins on the
 neck of idleness, and riding it with spurs of iron.

Thus have I endeavoured to give the reader a general
 idea of the laws which relate to this single point
 of employing the poor; and, as well as I am able to
 discern, of their defects, and the reasons of those defects.
 I have likewise given some hints for the cure;
 and have presumed to offer a plan, which, in my humble
 opinion, would effectually answer every purpose
 desired.

But 'till this plan shall be produced; or (which is
 more to be expected) 'till some man of greater abilities,
 as well as of greater authority, shall offer some
 new regulation for this purpose; something, at least,
 ought to be done to strengthen the laws already made,
 and to enforce their execution. The matter is of the
 highest concern; and imports us not only as we are
 good men and good Christians, but as we are good
 Englishmen; since not only preserving the poor
 from the highest degrees of wretchedness, but the making
 them useful subjects, is the thing proposed; *A*
work,

work, says Sir Josiah Child [n], *which would redound some hundreds of thousands per ann. to the public advantage.* Lastly, it is of the utmost importance to that point which is the subject matter of this treatise, for which reason I have thought myself obliged to give it a full consideration. ‘The want of a due provision, says lord [o] Hale, ‘for education and relief of the poor in a way of industry, is that which fills the gaols with malefactors, and fills the kingdom with idle and unprofitable persons, that consume the stock of the kingdom without improving it, and that will daily increase, even to a desolation in time. And this error in the first concoction is never remediable but by gibbets and whipping.’

In serious truth, if proper care should be taken to provide for the present poor, and to prevent their increase by laying some effectual restraints on the extravagance of the lower sort of people, the remaining part of this treatise would be rendered of little consequence; since few persons, I believe, have made their exit at Tyburn, who have not owed their fate to some of the causes before mentioned. But as I am not too sanguine in my expectations on this head, I shall now proceed to consider of some methods to obviate the frequency of robberies, which, if less efficacious, are, perhaps, much easier than those already proposed. And if we will not remove the temptation, at least we ought to take away all encouragement to robbery.

S E C T. V.

Of the punishment of RECEIVERS OF STOLEN GOODS.

NOW one great encouragement to theft of all kinds is the ease and safety with which stolen goods may be disposed of. It is a very old and vulgar, but a very true saying, ‘That if there were no receivers there would be no thieves.’ Indeed, could

[n] Page 88.
the relief of the poor.

[o] At the end of his discourse touching

not the thief find a market for his goods, there would be an absolute end of several kinds of theft; such as shop-lifting, burglary, &c. the objects of which are generally goods and not money. Nay robberies on the highway would so seldom answer the purpose of the adventurer, that very few would think it worth their while to risque so much with such small expectations.

But at present, instead of meeting with any such discouragement, the thief disposes of his goods with almost as much safety as the honestest tradesman: for first, if he hath made a booty of any value, he is almost sure of seeing it advertised within a day or two, directing him *to bring the goods to a certain place, where he is to receive a reward* (sometimes the full value of the booty) *and no questions asked*. This method of recovering stolen goods by the owner, a very learned judge formerly declared to have been, in his opinion, a composition of felony. And surely, if this be proved to be carried into execution, I think it must amount to a full conviction of that crime. But, indeed, such advertisements are in themselves so very scandalous, and of such pernicious consequence, that if men are not ashamed to own they prefer an old watch or a diamond ring to the good of the society, it is pity some effectual law was not contrived to prevent their giving this public countenance to robbery for the future.

But if the person robbed should prove either too honest, or too obstinate, to take this method of recovering his goods, the thief is under no difficulty in turning them into money. Among the great number of brokers and pawn-brokers several are to be found, who are always ready to receive a gold watch at an easy rate, and where no questions are asked, or, at least, where no answer is expected, but such as the thief can very readily make.

Besides the clandestine dealers this way, who satisfy their consciences with telling a ragged fellow, or wench, that *they hope* they came honestly by silver, and gold, and diamonds; there are others, who scorn such pitiful subterfuges, who engage openly with the thieves, and who have ware-houses filled with stolen goods on-

ly.

ly. Among the Jews, who live in a certain place in the city, there have been, and perhaps still are, some notable dealers this way, who, in an almost public manner, have carried on a trade for many years with Rotterdam, where they have their ware-houses and factors, and whither they export their goods with prodigious profit, and as prodigious impunity. And all this appeared very plainly last winter, in the examination of one Cadosa, a Jew, in the presence of the late excellent duke of Richmond, and many other noblemen and magistrates.

What then shall we say? is not this mischief worthy of some remedy, or is it not capable of it? the noble duke (one of the worthiest of magistrates, as well as of the best of men) thought otherwise, as would have appeared, had his valuable life, for the good of mankind, been prolonged.

Certain it is, that the law, as it now stands, is ineffectual to cure the evil. Let us see, therefore, if possible, where the defect lies.

At the common law, any one might lawfully (says lord Hale) have received his own goods from the felon who stole them [p]. But, if he had received them upon agreement not to prosecute, or to prosecute faintly, this would have been theftbote, punishable by imprisonment and ransom.

But in neither of the foregoing cases would the receiver of the goods have become an accessory to the felon. So if one man had bought another's goods of the thief, though he had known them to be stolen, if he had given the just value for them, he would not have become an accessory [q]. But if he had bought them at an undervalue, this, Sir Richard Hyde held, would have made him an accessory. My lord Hale differs from his opinion, and his reason to some readers may seem a pleasant one; *For if there be any odds* (says he) *he that gives more, benefits the felon more than he that gives less than value.* However this, his lordship thinks, may be a misdemeanour punishable by fine and imprisonment; but that the bare receiving of

[p] Hist. P. C. vol. I. p. 546. 619. ib. [q] Hist. P. C. ubi supra.

goods knowing them to be stolen makes not an accessory.

So says the great lord Hale, and so indeed was the law; though the judges seem not to have been unanimous in their opinion. In the book of *Affizes* [r], Scrope is said to have held otherwise; and though Shard there quashed an appeal of felony for receiving stolen goods only, yet I cannot help observing, that the reporter of the case hath left a note of astonishment at the judgment of the court. This, says he, was wonderful! and wonderful, surely it is, if he who receives, relieves, comforts, or assists a felon, shall be an accessory, that he shall not be so, who knowingly buys the goods of the felon; which is generally, I believe, the strongest relief, comfort, and assistance, which can be given him, and without the hope and expectation of which he would never have committed the theft or robbery.

It is unnecessary, however, to enter further into this controversy; since it is now expressly declared by statute [s], 'That the receivers of stolen goods, knowing them to be stolen, shall be deemed accessories after the fact.'

But this statute, though it removed the former absurdity of the law, was not sufficient to remedy the evil; there yet remaining many difficulties in bringing these pernicious miscreants to justice, consistent with legal rules. For,

1. As the offence of the accessory is dependent on that of the principal, he could not be tried or outlawed, till after the conviction or attainder of the principal; so that, however strong evidence there might be against the receiver, he was still safe, unless the thief could be apprehended.

2. If the thief on his trial should be acquitted, as often happens through some defect of evidence in the most notorious cases, the receiver, being only an accessory, though he hath confessed his crime, or though the most undeniable evidence could be brought against him, must be acquitted likewise.

[r] 27 Affiz. 69.

[s] 3 and 4 W. and M. c. ix.

3. In petit larceny, there can be no such accessory [t]: for though the statute says, that a receiver of stolen goods, knowing, &c. shall be an accessory after the fact, that is, legally understood to mean only in cases where such accessory may be by law; and that is confined to such felonies as are to receive judgment of death, or to have the benefit of clergy. Now, for petit larceny, which is the stealing goods of less value than a shilling, the punishment at common law is whipping; and this was properly enough considered as too trifling an offence to extend the guilt to criminals in a second degree. But since juries have taken upon them to consider the value of goods as immaterial, and to find upon their oaths, that what is proved to be worth several shillings, and sometimes several pounds, is of the value of ten-pence, this is become a matter of more consequence. For instance; if a pickpocket steal several handkerchiefs, or other things, to the value of twenty shillings, and the receiver of these, knowing them to be stolen, is discovered, and both are indicted, the one as principal, the other as accessory, as they must be; if the jury convict the principal, and find the goods to be of as high value as a shilling, he must receive judgment of death; whereas, by finding the goods (which they do upon their oaths) to be of the value of ten-pence, the thief is ordinarily sentenced to be whipt, and returns immediately to his trade of picking pockets, and the accessory is of course discharged, and of course returns to his trade of receiving the booty. Thus the jury are perjured, the public highly injured, and two excellent acts of parliament defeated, that two miscreants may laugh at their prosecutors, and at the law.

The two former of these defects are indeed remedied by a later statute [u], which enacts, 'That the buyers and receivers of stolen goods, knowing them to be stolen, may be prosecuted for a misdemeanor, and punished by fine and imprisonment, though the principal felon be not before convicted of felony.'

[t] Cro. Eliz. 750. Hale. Hist. vol. I. p. 530. 618.

[u] 3 and 4 W. and M. c. ix.

This last statute is again repeated in the 5th of queen Anne [*w*]; and there the power of the court to punish in the case of the misdemeanor, is farther increased to any other corporal punishment, which the court shall think fit to inflict, instead of fine and imprisonment; and, in the case of the felony, the accessory is to receive judgment of death; but the benefit of clergy is not taken away. Lastly, by the statute of George II. [*x*] the receivers of stolen goods, knowing, &c. are to be transported for fourteen years. And by the same statute, every person taking money or reward, directly or indirectly, under pretence or upon account of helping any to stolen goods, unless such person apprehend and bring to his trial the felon, and give evidence against him, is made guilty of felony without benefit of clergy.

And thus stands the law at this day; which, notwithstanding the repeated endeavours of the legislature, experience shews us, is incapable of removing this deplorable evil from the society.

The principal defect seems, to me, to lie in the extreme difficulty of convicting the offender; for,

1. Where the thief can be taken, you are not at liberty to prosecute for the misdemeanor,
2. The thief himself, who must be convicted before the accessory is to be tried, cannot be a witness.
3. Without such evidence, it is very difficult to convict of the knowledge, that the goods were stolen; which, in this case, can appear from circumstances only. Such are principally, 1st, Buying goods of value, of persons very unlikely to be the lawful proprietors. 2^{dly}, Buying them for much less than their real value. 3^{dly}, Buying them, or selling them again, in a clandestine manner, concealing them, &c. None of these are commonly liable to be proved; and I have known a man acquitted, where most of these circumstances have appeared against him.

What then is to be done, to extirpate this stubborn mischief? to prove the pernicious consequence of

[*w*] Chap. xxxi,

[*x*] Chap. xi.

which, I need, I think, only appeal to the sense of parliament, testified in so many repeated acts, and very strongly expressed in their preambles.

First, Might it not be proper to put an effectual stop to the present scandalous method of compounding felony, by public advertisements in the newspapers? might not the inserting such advertisements be rendered highly criminal in the authors of them, and in the printers themselves, unless they discover such authors?

2dly, Is it impossible to find any means of regulating brokers and pawnbrokers? if so, what arguments are there against extirpating entirely a set of miscreants, which, like other vermin, harbour only about the poor, and grow fat by sucking their blood?

3dly, Why should not the receiving stolen goods, knowing them to be stolen, be made an original offence? by which means the thief, who is often a poultry offender in comparison of the receiver, and sometimes his pupil, might, in little felonies, be made a witness against him: for thus the trial of the receiver would in no case depend on the trial, or conviction, of the thief.

4thly, Why may not the bare buying or taking to pawn stolen goods, above a certain value, be made evidence of receiving with knowledge, &c. unless the goods were bought in market overt (no broker's or pawnbroker's shop to be reputed such market overt) or unless the defendant could prove, by a credible witness to the transaction, that he had good cause to regard the seller or pawner of the goods to be the real owner. If 20*s.* was the value limited, it would answer all the purposes contended for; and would in no wise interfere with the honest trade (if indeed it ever be so) between the pawnbroker and the poor.

If none of these methods be thought possible or proper, I hope better will be found out. Something ought to be done, to put an end to the present practice, of which I see daily the most pernicious consequences; many of the younger thieves appearing plainly to be taught, encouraged, and employed by the receivers.

S E C T. VI.

Of Laws relating to VAGABONDS.

THE other great encouragement to robbery, beside the certain means of finding a market for the booty, is the probability of escaping punishment.

First, then, The robber hath great hopes of being undiscovered : and this is one principal reason why robberies are more frequent in this town, and in its neighbourhood, than in the remoter parts of the kingdom.

Whoever indeed considers the cities of London and Westminster, with the late vast addition of their suburbs ; the great irregularity of their buildings ; the immense number of lanes, alleys, courts, and bye-places ; must think, that, had they been intended for the very purpose of concealment, they could scarce have been better contrived. Upon such a view, the whole appears as a vast wood or forest, in which a thief may harbour with as great security, as wild beasts do in the desarts of Africa or Arabia : for, by *wandering* from one part to another, and often shifting his quarters, he may almost avoid the possibility of being discovered.

Here, according to the method I have hitherto pursued, I will consider, what remedy our laws have applied to this evil, namely, the *wandering* of the poor, and whether, and wherein, these remedies appear defective.

There is no part of our ancient constitution more admirable than that which was calculated to prevent the concealment of thieves and robbers. The original of this institution is given to Alfred, at the end of his wars with the Danes, when the English were very much debauched by the example of those barbarians, and betook themselves to all manner of licentiousness and rapine. These evils were encouraged, as the historians say, by the vagabond state of the offenders, who, having no settled place of abode, upon committing

mitting any offence, shifted their quarters, and went where it was difficult to discover them. To remedy this mischief, therefore, Alfred, having limited the shires or counties in a better manner than before, divided them into hundreds, and these again into tithings, decennaries, or ten families [y].

Over every one of these tithings or decennaries, there was a chief, called the tithingman or burghholder, who had a power to call a court, and to try small offences; the greater being referred to that court, which was in like manner established over every hundred.

Every one of these heads of families were pledges to each other for the behaviour of all their family; and were likewise reciprocally pledges for each other to the hundred.

If any person was suspected of a crime, he was obliged to find security for his good behaviour out of the same hundred and tithing. This if he could not find, he had reason to apprehend being treated with great severity; and if any accused person, either before or after his finding bail, had fled from justice, the whole tithing and hundred should pay a fine to the king.

In case of the default of appearance in a decenner, his nine pledges had one-and-thirty days to bring the delinquent forth to justice. If this failed, then the chief of those decenners, by the vote of that and the neighbour decennaries, was to purge himself both of the guilt of the fact, and of being parties to the flight of the delinquent. And if they could not do this, then they were, by their own oaths, to acquit themselves, and to bind themselves to bring the delinquent to justice as soon as they could; and, in the mean time, to

[y] 'By these ten families (says the annotator to Rapin) we are not to understand ten house-keepers, but ten lords of manors, with all their vassals, tenants, labourers, and slaves, who, though they did not all live under their lord's roof, were all counted part of his family. As there were no little freeholders in those times, nor for long after, ten such families must occupy a large space of ground, and might well constitute a rural tithing.' But this rural tithing would be larger than the hundred itself; and the very name and office of a tithingman, continued in parishes to this day, shews that lords of manors could not be here meant.

pay the damage out of the estate of the delinquent; and, if that were not sufficient, then out of their own estate [x].

Every subject in the kingdom was registered in some tithing; only persons of the first rank had the privilege (says Mr. Rapin) [a] that their single family should make a tithing, for which they were responsible. 'All archbishops, bishops, earls, barons, and all (says Bracton) who have sok and sac, tol and team, and these kinds of liberties, ought to have under their FRIDHBURGH, all their knights, servants, esquires; and, if any of them prove delinquent, the lord shall bring him to justice, or pay his fine [b].'

The master of the family was answerable for all who fed at his board, and were of his livery, and for all his servants of every kind, even for those who served him for their food only, without wages. These were said to be of his manupast; so were his guests; and if a man abode at any house but two nights, the master of that house was answerable for him [c].

In a word, says Bracton, every man, as well freemen as others, ought to belong to some frankpledge (*i. e.* to some decenna) unless he be a traveller, or belong to the manupast of some other; or unless he gives some countervailing security to the public, as dignity (*viz.* nobility), order (knighthood, or of the clergy), or estate (*viz.* either freehold in land, or personal effects (*res immobiles*) if he be a citizen.

By the laws of Edward the Confessor, every person, of the age of twelve years, ought to be sworn in a view of frankpledge, *That he will neither become a thief himself, nor be any wise accessory to theft.*

This court, Briton [d] tells us, was to be holden twice a year, which was afterwards reduced to once a year by *Magna Charta*; and no man, says the Mirror, was, by an ancient ordinance, suffered to remain in the kingdom, who was not enrolled in *decenna*, and had freemen for his pledges [e].

[x] Bacon's Hist. Disc. p. 43.
Government of the Anglo-Saxons.

[a] Corona, cap. x.

[b] Bract. ubi sup. Brit. 19. b.

[d] Brit. 36. b.
sect. 1.

[e] Mirr. chap. i. sect. 17. and chap. v.
Such

[a] Dissertation on the

[b] Bract. l. iii. De

Such was this excellent constitution; which, even in Alfred's time, when it was in its infancy, wrought so admirable an effect, that, Ingulphus says, a traveller might have openly left a sum of money safely in the fields and highways, and have found it safe and untouched a month afterwards [f]. Nay, William of Malmfbury tells us, the king ordered bracelets of gold to be hung up in the cross-ways, as a proof of the honesty of his people, none ever offering to meddle with them [g].

But this constitution would have been deficient, if it had only provided for the incorporating the subjects, unless it had confined them to the places where they were thus incorporated.

And therefore, by the laws of Alured or Canute, it was rendered unlawful for any of the decenners to depart from their dwelling, without the consent of their fellow-pledges; nor were they at liberty to leave the country, without the licence of the sheriff or governor of the same [h].

And if a person, who fled from one tithing, was received in another, the tithing receiving him should answer for his deed (*i. e.* by amercement) if he was there found [i].

'Before this order was established,' says Rapin, 'the meaner sort of people might shift their quarters, by reason of their obscurity, which prevented them from being taken notice of. But it was impossible for them to change their habitation, after they were obliged to bring a testimonial from their tithing, to enable them to settle and be registered in another [k].'

'Whilst this ancient constitution remained entire, such peace,' says lord Coke, 'was preserved within the realm, as no injuries, homicides, robberies, thefts, riots, tumults, or other offences, were committed; so as a man, with a white wand, might safely have ridden, before the Conquest, with much

[f] Script. post Bedam, p. 370.

[g] Ib. p. 44.

[h] Bacon, p. 44.

[i] Brit. ubi supra.

[k] Rapin, ubi sup.

‘ money about him, without any weapon, through England [l].’ Nay, even in the tumultuous times of William the Conqueror, the historians tell us, there was scarce a robber to be found in the kingdom.

This view of frankpledge remained long after the Conquest: for we find it twice repeated in one chapter of *Magna Charta* [m]; and there particularly it is said, *Fiat autem visus de frankpleg’ sic videlicet QUOD PAX NOSTRA TENEATUR*. Nay, Bracton, who wrote after that time, and Fleta after him, speak of frankpledge as then subsisting.

The statute of Marlborough likewise, which was made the 52d of Henry III. mentions the same court; as doth *Briton*, who wrote still later, in many places. And in the 17th of Edward II. an act was made, called, *The Statute for the View of Frankpledge* [n].

Nay, in the reign of Henry IV. we find an amercement for not coming to a view of frankpledge; and there the whole Court of King’s Bench were of opinion, that every man, as well masters as servants, were obliged to repair to this court [o]; and though then possibly it was degenerated, and become little more than form.

But in process of time, this institution dwindled to nothing; so that lord Coke might truly say, *Quod vera institutio illius curiæ evanuit et velut umbra ejusdem adhuc remanet*; and, a little after, speaking of the frankpledge, the *Decennarii*, and the *Decenna*, he says, ‘ They are names continued only as shadows of antiquity [p].’ Nay, this great man himself (if, after a most careful and painful perusal of all he hath writ, as well here as in his 4th Institute, and other places on the subject, I may be allowed to say so) seems to have no very clear idea concerning them; and might have fairly owned, of the original of the leet and frankpledge, what one of the sages doth of

[l] 2 Inst. 73.
matter was before that transferred from the decennary court to the leets and sheriff’s tourn.

[m] Chap. xxxiii.

[n] But this

[o] Hill. 3 H. IV. Pl. 19.

[p] 2 Inst. 72, 73.

an hundred, in the book of Henry VII. 'That a hundred had existed above a hundred years; and therefore, as to the true definition of a hundred, and whether it was composed of a hundred towns, or a hundred lordships, and whether it had anciently more or less jurisdiction, he frankly owned that he knew nothing of the matter [q].

The statute of Marlborough [r] had perhaps given a fatal blow to the true and ancient use of the view of frankpledge; of which, as lord Coke says [s], the sheriffs had made an ill use: for, in the 3d year of the succeeding king [t], we find the legislature providing against notorious felons, and such as be openly of evil fame, that they shall not be admitted to bail; and, in the 13th, the statute of Winchester, entirely altered the law, and gave us a new constitution on this head.

1. By this act the whole hundred is made answerable in case of robberies.

2. In order to prevent the concealment of robbers in towns, it is enacted, 1. That the gates of all walled towns shall be shut from sun-setting to sun-rising. 2. A watch is appointed, who are to arrest all strangers. 3. No person is to lodge in the suburbs, nor in any place out of the town, unless his host will answer for him. 4. The bailiffs of towns shall make enquiry, once within fifteen days at the farthest, of all persons lodged in the suburbs, &c. and of those who have received any suspicious persons.

3. To prevent the concealment of robbers without the towns, it is enacted, that the highways leading from one market-town to another shall be enlarged, and no bushes, woods, or dykes, in which felons may be concealed, shall be suffered therein.

4. Felons are to be pursued by hue and cry.

This statute, says lord Coke, was made against a gang of rogues, then called Roberdsimen, that took

[q] 8 H. VII. 3 b. [r] Chap. xxiv. By which justices in eyre are forbidden to amerce townships, because all of twelve years old were not sworn.

[s] 2 Instit. 147.

[t] Westminster I. chap. xv.

their denomination of one Robbin Hood, who lived in Yorkshire in the reign of Richard I. and who, with his companions, harbouring in woods and deserts, committed a great number of robberies and other outrages on the subject. From this arch-thief a great number of idle dissolute fellows, who were called Drawlatches, Ribauds, and Roberdsmen, took their rise, and infested this kingdom for above a century, notwithstanding the many endeavours of the legislature from time to time to suppress them.

In all these laws, the principal aim visibly was, to prevent idle persons wandering from place to place, which, as we have before seen, was one great point of the decennary constitution.

Thus, by a law made in the 34th year of Edward III. a labourer departing from his service into another county, was to be burned in the forehead with the letter F. And by the same statute, if a labourer or servant do fly into a city or borough, the chief officer, on request, was to deliver him up.

Again, in the 7th year of Richard II. the justices of peace are ordered to examine vagabonds; and, if they have no sureties for their good behaviour, to commit them to prison.

In the 11th year of Henry VII. it was enacted, that vagabonds and idle persons should be set on the stocks three days and three nights, and have no other sustenance but bread and water, and then shall be put out of the town; and whosoever gave such idle persons relief, forfeited 12*d.*

By 22 Henry VIII. persons calling themselves Egyptians shall not come into the realm, under penalty of forfeiting their goods; and, if they do not depart within fifteen days after they are commanded, shall be imprisoned.

By the 1 and 2 Philip and Mary [*u*], Egyptians coming into the kingdom, and remaining here a month, are made guilty of felony without benefit of clergy.

[*u*] Chap. iv.

And

And those who bring them into the realm, forfeit 40*l*.

By the 5 Eliz. the crime of felony without clergy is extended to all who are found in the company of Egyptians, or who shall counterfeit, transform, or disguise themselves as such.

By 22 Henry VIII. a vagabond taken begging shall be whipped, and then sworn to return to the place of his birth, or last abode for three years, there to put himself to labour.

By 27 Henry VIII. a valiant beggar, or sturdy vagabond, shall be whipped for the first offence, and sent to the place of his birth, &c. for the second, the upper part of the gristle of his right ear cut off; and if after that he be taken wandering in idleness, &c. he shall be adjudged and executed as a felon.

I shall mention no more acts (for several were made) between this and the 39th Elizabeth, when the former acts concerning vagabonds were all repealed, and the several provisions against them were reduced to one law.

This act, which contained many wholesome provisions, remained in force a long time, but at length was totally repealed by the 12th of Queen Anne; as this was again by the 13 George II. which last-mentioned statute stands now repealed by another made about six years ago [*w*].

I have taken this short view of these repealed laws, in order to enforce two considerations. First, That the removal of an evil, which the legislature have so often endeavoured to redress, is of great importance to the society. 2dly, That an evil, which so many subsequent laws have failed of removing, is of a very stubborn nature, and extremely difficult to be cured.

Here I hope to be forgiven, when I suggest, that the law hath probably failed in this instance, from want of sufficient direction to a single point. As on a former head, the disease seems to be no other than *idleness*; so here, *wandering* is the cause of the mis-

chief, and that alone to which the remedy should be applied. This, one would imagine, should be the chief, if not sole, intent of all laws against vagabonds, which might, in a synonymous phrase, be called laws against wanderers. But as the word itself hath obtained by vulgar use a more complex signification, so have the laws on this head had a more general view than to extirpate this mischief; and by that means, perhaps, have failed of producing such an effect.

I will therefore confine myself, as I have hitherto done on this head, to the single point of preventing the poor from wandering, one principal cause of the encrease of robbers; as it is the chief means of preserving them from the pursuit of justice: it being impossible for any thief to carry on his trade long with impunity among his neighbours, and where not only his person, but his way of life, must be well known.

Now to obviate this evil, the law, as it now stands, hath provided in a twofold manner. 1. By way of prevention; and, 2. By way of remedy.

As to the first, the statute of *Elizabeth* declares [x], That no person retained in husbandry, or in any art or science in the act mentioned [y], after the time of his retainer is expired, shall depart out of any city, parish, &c. nor out of the country, &c. to serve in any other, unless he have a testimonial, under the seal of the city or town corporate, or of the constable or other head officer, and two other honest householders of the city, town, or parish, where he last served, declaring his lawful departure, and the name of the shire and the place where he served last. This certificate is to be delivered to the servant, and registred by the parson for 2*d.* and the form of it is given in the act.

And no person is to be retained in any other service, without shewing such testimonial to the chief officer of the town corporate, and in every other

[x] 5 Eliz. c. iv. sect. 10. in force, though not in use.

[y] i. e. in almost every trade,

place to the constable, curate, &c. on pain of imprisonment, till he procure a testimonial; and, if he cannot procure such testimonial within twenty-one days, he shall be whipped, and treated like a vagabond; so shall he be if found with a forged testimonial. And those who receive him without shewing such testimonial as aforesaid, forfeit 5*l*.

As to the 2d, the law hath been extremely liberal in its provisions. These are of two sorts; 1. Simply compulsory; and, 2. Compulsory with punishment. Under the former head may be ranged the several acts of parliament relating to the settlement, or rather removal, of the poor.

As these statutes, though very imperfectly executed, are pretty generally known (the nation having paid some millions to Westminster-hall for their knowledge of them) I shall mention them very slightly in this place.

The statute of Elizabeth, together with the wise execution of it, having made the poor an intolerable burden to the public, disputes began to arise between parishes, to whose lot it fell to provide for certain individuals: for, the laws for confining the poor to their own homes being totally disregarded, these used to ramble wherever whim or conveniency invited them. The overseers of one parish were perhaps more liberal of the parochial fund than in another; or, sometimes probably the overseer of the parish of A was a friend or relation of a poor person of the parish of B, who did not choose to work. From some such reason, the poor of one parish began to bring a charge on another.

To remedy such inconveniences, immediately after the Restoration [z], a statute was made, by which if any poor man, likely to be chargeable, came to inhabit in a foreign parish, unless in a tenement of 10*l*. a year, the overseers might complain to one justice within forty days, and then two justices were

[z] 13 and 14 Car. II. c. xii.

to remove the poor person to the place of his last legal settlement.

By a second act [a], the forty days are to be reckoned after notice [given in writing to the church-warden or overseer by the poor person, containing the place of his abode, number of his family, &c.

But by the same statute, the executing of a public annual office during a year, or being charged with, and paying to, the public taxes, &c. or (if unmarried and not having a child) being lawfully hired into any parish, and serving for one year, or being bound apprentice by indenture, and inhabiting, &c. are all made good settlements without notice.

By a third statute [b], persons bringing a certificate signed by the overseers, &c. and allowed by two justices, cannot be removed till they become chargeable.

By a fourth [c], no such certificate person shall gain a settlement by any other act than by, *bona fide*, taking a lease of a tenement of 10*l.* *per annum*, or by executing an annual office.

By a fifth [d], no apprentice or hired servant of certificate person shall, by such service or apprenticeship, gain any settlement.

By a sixth [e], no person, by any purchase, of which the consideration doth not *bona fide* amount to 30*l.* shall gain any settlement longer than while he dwells on such purchase.

So much for these laws of removal, concerning which there are several other acts of parliament and law cases innumerable.

And yet the law itself is, as I have said, very imperfectly executed at this day, and that for several reasons.

1. It is attended with great trouble: for as the act of Ch. II. *very wisely* requires two justices, and the Court of King's Bench requires them both to be present together (though they seldom are so) the order of removal is sometimes difficult to be obtained, and

[a] 3 and 4 W. and M. c. xi. See 1 Jac. II. c. xvii.

[b] 8 and 9 W. III. c. xxx.

[c] 9 and 10 W. III. c. xi.

[d] 12 Anne, c. xviii.

[e] Geo. I. c. vii.

more difficult to be executed; for the parish to which the party is to be removed (perhaps with a family) is often in a distant county; nay, sometimes they are to be carried from one end of the kingdom to another.

2. It is often attended with great expence, as well for the reason aforesaid, as because the parish removing is liable to an appeal from the parish to which the poor is removed. This appeal is sometimes brought by a wealthy and litigious parish against a poor one, without any colour of right whatever.

3. The removal is often ineffectual: for as the appeal is almost certain to be brought, if an attorney lives in the neighbourhood; so is it almost as sure to succeed, if a justice lives in the parish. And as for relief in the King's Bench, if the justices of peace will allow you to go thither (for that they will not always do) the delay, as well as the cost, is such, that the remedy is often worse than the disease.

For these reasons, it can be no wonder that parishes are not very forward to put this law in execution. Indeed, in all cases of removal, the good of the parish, and not of the public, is consulted; nay, sometimes the good of an individual only: and, therefore the poor man, who is capable of getting his livelihood by his dexterity at any handicraft, and likely to do it by his industry, is sure to be removed with his family; especially if the overseer, or any of his relations, should be of the same occupation; but the idle poor, who threaten to rival no man in his business, are never taken any notice of, till they become actually chargeable; and if, by begging or robbing, they avoid this, as it is no man's interest, so no man thinks it his duty to apprehend them.

It cannot therefore be expected, that any good of the kind I am contending for, should be effected by this branch of the law; let us therefore, in the second place, take a view of that which is expressly levelled at vagrants, and calculated, as it appears, for the very purpose of suppressing wanderers.

To survey this branch will be easy, as all the laws concerning vagrants are now reduced into one act of parlia-

parliament; and it is the easier still, as this act is very clearly penned, and (which is not always the case) reduced to a regular and intelligible method.

By this act, then, three degrees of offences are constituted:

First, Persons become idle and disorderly within the act, by, 1. Threatning to run away and to leave their wives or children to the parish. 2. Unlawfully returning to the place from whence they have been legally removed by the order of two justices, without bringing a certificate, &c. 3. Living idle without employment, and refusing to work for usual and common wages. 4. By begging in their own parishes.

Secondly, Persons by, 1. Going about as patent-gatherers, or gatherers of alms under pretence of loss by fire, or other casualty; or, 2. Going about as collectors for prisons, gaols, or hospitals. 3. Being fencers and bearwards. 4. Or common players of interludes, &c. 5. Or minstrels, jugglers. 6. Pretending to be gypsies, or wandering in such habit. 7. Pretending to physiognomy, or like crafty science, &c. 8. Using any subtle craft to deceive and impose on any of his majesty's subjects. 9. Playing or sitting at unlawful games. 10. Running away, and leaving wives or children, whereby they become chargeable to any parish. 11. Wandering abroad as petty chapmen or pedlars, not authorised by law. 12. Wandering abroad and lodging in ale-houses, barns, out-houses, or in the open air, not giving a good account of themselves. 13. Wandering abroad and begging, pretending to be soldiers, mariners, seafaring men, or pretending to go to work at harvest. 14. Wandering abroad and begging, are to be deemed rogues and vagabonds.

Thirdly, 1. End-gatherers offending against the 13 George 1. entitled, *An act for the better regulation of the woollen manufactures*, &c. being convicted of such offence; 2. Persons apprehended as rogues and vagabonds escaping, or, 3. refusing to go before a justice, or, 4. refusing to be examined on oath, or, 5. refusing to be conveyed by a pass, or, 6. on examination

amination giving a false account of themselves after warning of the punishment. 7. Rogues and vagabonds escaping out of the house of correction, &c. or, 8, those who having been punished as rogues and vagabonds, shall offend again as such, are made incorrigible rogues.

Now as to the *first* of these three divisions, it were to be wished, that persons who are found in ale-houses, night-houses, &c. after a certain hour at night, had been included; for many such, though of very suspicious characters, taken up at privy searches, fall not under any of the above descriptions. Some of these I have known discharged, against whom capital complaints have appeared, when it hath been too late. Why might not the justice be entrusted with a power of detaining any suspicious person, who could produce no known house-keeper, or one of credit, to his character, for three days, within which time he might, by means of an advertisement, be viewed by numbers who have been lately robbed? some such have been, I know, confined upon an old statute as persons of evil fame, with great emolument to the public.

But I come to the *second* head, namely, of vagabonds: and here I must observe, that *wandering* is of itself made no offence: so that unless such wanderer be either a petty chapman, or a beggar, or lodger in ale-houses, &c. he is not within the act of parliament.

Now, however useful this excellent law may be in the country, it will by no means serve the purpose in this town: for though most of the rogues who infest the public roads and streets, indeed almost all the thieves in general, are vagabonds in the true sense of the word, being wanderers from their lawful place of abode, very few of them will be proved vagabonds within the words of this act of parliament. These vagabonds do, indeed, get their livelihood by thieving, and not as petty beggars or petty chapmen; and have their lodging not in ale-houses, &c. but in private houses, where many of them resort together,

together, and unite in gangs, paying each 2*d.* per night for their beds.

The following account I have had from Mr. Welch, the high constable of Holborn; and none who know that gentleman, will want any confirmation of the truth of it.

‘ That in the parish of St. Giles’s there are great numbers of houses set apart for the reception of idle persons and vagabonds, who have their lodgings there for two-pence a night: that in the above parish, and in St. George, Bloomsbury, one woman alone occupies seven of these houses, all properly accommodated with miserable beds from the cellar to the garret, for such two-penny lodgers: that in these beds, several of which are in the same room, men and women, often strangers to each other, lie promiscuously, the price of a double bed being no more than three-pence, as an encouragement to them to lie together: that as these places are thus adapted to whoredom, so are they no less provided for drunkenness, gin being sold in them all at a penny a quartern; so that the smallest sum of money serves for intoxication: that in the execution of search-warrants, Mr. Welch rarely finds less than twenty of these houses open for the receipt of all comers at the latest hours: that in one of these houses, and that not a large one, he hath numbered fifty-eight persons of both sexes, the stench of whom was so intolerable, that it compelled him in a very short time to quit the place.’

Nay, I can add, what I myself once saw in the parish of Shore-ditch, where two little houses were emptied of near seventy men and women; amongst whom was one of the prettiest girls I had ever seen, who had been carried off by an Irishman, to consummate her marriage on her wedding-night, in a room where several others were in bed at the same time.

If one considers the destruction of all morality, decency and modesty; the swearing, whoredom, and drunkenness, which is eternally carrying on in these houses, on the one hand, and the excessive poverty and misery of most of the inhabitants on the other; it

it seems doubtful whether they are more the objects of detestation, or compassion: for such is the poverty of these wretches, that, upon searching all the above number, the money found upon all of them (except the bride, who, as I afterwards heard, had robbed her mistress) did not amount to one shilling; and I have been credibly informed, that a single loaf hath supplied a whole family with their provisions for a week. Lastly, if any of these miserable creatures fall sick (and it is almost a miracle, that stench, vermin, and want should ever suffer them to be well) they are turned out in the streets by their merciless host or hostess, where, unless some parish officer of extraordinary charity relieves them, they are sure miserably to perish, with the addition of hunger and cold to their disease.

This picture, which is taken from the life, will appear strange to many; for the evil here described, is, I am confident, very little known, especially to those of the better sort. Indeed this is the only excuse, and I believe the only reason, that it hath been so long tolerated: for when we consider the number of these wretches, which, in the out-skirts of the town, amounts to a great many thousands [f], it is a nuisance, which will appear to be big with every moral and political mischief. Of these, the excessive misery of the wretches themselves, oppressed with want, and sunk in every species of debauchery, and the loss of so many lives to the public, are obvious and immediate consequences. There are some more remote, which, however, need not be mentioned to the discerning.

Among other mischiefs attending this wretched nuisance, the great increase of thieves must necessarily be one. The wonder in fact is, that we have not a thousand more robbers than we have; indeed, that all these wretches are not thieves, must give us

[f] Most of these are Irish, against the importation of whom a severe law was made in the reign of Hen. VI. and many of the repealed vagrant acts contained a clause for the same purpose.

either a very high idea of their honesty, or a very mean one of their capacity and courage.

Where then is the redress? is it not *to hinder the poor from wandering*, and this by compelling the parish and peace officers to apprehend such wanderers or vagabonds, and by empowering the magistrate effectually to punish and send them to their habitations? Thus, if we cannot discover, or will not encourage, any cure for idleness, we shall at least compel the poor to starve or beg at home: for there it will be impossible for them to steal or rob, without being presently hanged or transported out of the way.

S E C T. VII.

Of apprehending the persons of felons.

I COME now to a third encouragement which the thief flatters himself with, viz. in his hopes of escaping from being apprehended.

Nor is this hope without foundation: how long have we known highwaymen reign in this kingdom after they have been publicly known for such? have not some of these committed robberies in open daylight, in the sight of many people, and have afterward rode solemnly and triumphantly through the neighbouring towns, without any danger or molestation? this happens to every rogue who is become eminent for his audaciousness, and is thought to be desperate; and is, in a more particular manner, the case of great and numerous gangs, many of which have, for a long time, committed the most open outrages in defiance of the law. Officers of justice have owned to me, that they have passed by such, with warrants in their pockets against them, without daring to apprehend them; and, indeed, they could not be blamed for not exposing themselves to sure destruction: for it is a melancholy truth, that, at this very day, a rogue no sooner gives the alarm, within certain purlieus, than twenty or thirty armed villains are found ready to come to his assistance.

On

On this head the law may seem not to have been very defective in its cautions; *first*, by vesting not only the officers of justice, but every private man, with authority for securing these miscreants, of which authority it may be of service to the officers, as well as to the public in general, to be more particularly informed.

First, By [g] Westminster I. Persons of evil fame are to be imprisoned without bail. By the statute of Winchester [b], suspicious night-walkers are to be arrested and detained by the watch. A statute made in [i] 5 Ed. III. reciting that many manslaughters, felonies, and robberies had been done in times past, enacts, that if any person have an evil suspicion of such offenders, they shall be incontinently arrested by the constable, and shall be delivered to the bailiff of the franchise, or to the sheriff, to be kept in prison till the coming of the justices. The 34 [k] Edw. III. gives power to the justices of peace, *inter alia*, to enquire of wanderers, and such as will not labour, and to arrest and imprison suspicious persons, and to take sureties of the good behaviour of persons of evil fame, 'To the intent,' says the statute, 'that the people be not by such rioters, &c. troubled nor endamaged, nor the peace blemished, nor merchants nor others passing by the highways of the realm disturbed, nor put in peril by such offenders.'

Secondly, By the common law, every person who hath committed a felony may be arrested and secured by any private man present at the said fact, though he hath no general nor particular authority, *i. e.* though he be no officer of justice, nor have any writ or warrant for so doing; and such private man may either deliver the felon to the constable, secure him in a gaol, or carry him before a magistrate [l]. And if he refuses to yield, those who arrest may justify beating [m] him; or, in case of absolute necessity, killing him [n].

[g] Westm. I. chap. xv.

[b] Winton. chap. iv.

[i] 5 Edw. III. chap. xiv.

[k] 34 Edw. III. c. i.

[l] Hale's hist. P. C. vol. I. p. 587. vol. II. 77.

[m] Pult.

10. a.

[n] Hale's hist. vol. I. 588.

Nor is this arrest merely allowed; it is enjoyed by law, and the omission without some good excuse is a misdemeanor punishable by amercement, or fine and imprisonment [o].

Again, Every private man may arrest another on suspicion of felony, though he was not present at the fact [p]. But then if the party arrested should prove innocent, two circumstances are necessary to justify the arrest. 1st, A felony must be actually committed; and 2^{dly}, there must be a reasonable cause of suspicion [q]; and common fame hath been adjudged to be such cause [r].

But in this latter case my lord Hale advises the private person, if possible, to have recourse to the magistrate, and obtain his warrant and the assistance of the [s] constable; for this arrest is not required by law, nor is the party punishable for neglecting it; and should the person arrested, or endeavoured to be arrested, prove innocent, the party arresting him, &c. will, in a great measure, be answerable for the ill consequence; which if it be the death of the innocent person occasioned by force or resistance, this will, at least, be manslaughter; and if the other should be killed in the attempt, this likewise will amount to manslaughter only [t].

Again, any private person may justify arresting a felon pursued by hue and cry. This, as the word imports, is a public alarm raised all over the country, in which the constable is first to search his own vill or division, and then to raise all the neighbouring vills about, who are to pursue the felon with horse and [u] foot. And this hue and cry may either be after a person certain, or on a robbery committed where the person is not known; and in the latter case, those who pursue it may take such persons

[o] Hale, vol. I. 588. vol. II. 76, 77. [p] Lamb. l. ii. c. 3. Dalt. 403. Hale's hist. vol. I. 588. 3 Hen. VII. c. i.
[q] Hale's hist. vol. II. 80. [r] Dalt. 407. 5 H. VII. 4. 5.
[s] Hale's hist. vol. II. 76. [t] Hale's hist. vol. II. 82--3--4. [u] Hale's hist. vol. II. 101.

as they have probable cause to suspect [w], vagrants, &c.

This method of pursuit lies at the common law, and is mentioned by Bracton [x]; and it is enforced by many statutes, as by [y] Westm. I. 'All are to be ready at the summons of the sheriff, and at the cry of the county, to arrest felons as well within franchises as without.' By 4 Edw. I. 'Hue and cry is ordered to be levied for all murders, burglaries, men slain, or in peril to be slain, and all are to follow it. And lastly, the statute of Winton enacts as we have seen before.

And this pursuit may be raised, 1. By a private person. 2. By the country without an officer. 3. By an officer without a warrant. 4. By the warrant of a magistrate. And this last, if it can be obtained, is the safest way: for then all who assist are enabled by the statutes 7 and 21 Jac. to plead the general issue [z]. The common law so strictly enjoined this pursuit, that, if any defect in raising it lay in the lord of the franchise, the franchise should be seized into the king's hands; and, if the neglect lay in the bailiff, he should have a heavy fine, and a year's imprisonment, or suffer two years imprisonment without a fine [a]. And now, by a very late [b] statute, 'If any constable, headborough, &c. of the hundred where any robberies shall happen, shall refuse or neglect to make hue and cry after the felons with the utmost expedition, as soon as he shall receive notice thereof, he shall, for every such refusal and neglect, forfeit, 5*l.* half to the king and half to the informer.'

Now hue and cry is of three different kinds: 1. Against a person certain by name. 2. Against a person certain by description. 3. On a robbery, burglary, &c. where the person is neither known, nor capable of being described.

When a hue and cry is raised, every private man is not only justified in pursuing; but may be obliged,

[w] Hale's hist. vol. II. 103.

[x] Lib. iii. c. 1.

[y] Cap. ix.

[z] Hale's hist. vol. I. 465. vol. II. 99, 100.

[a] Fleta, l. i. c. 24. ad init.

[b] 3 Geo. II. c. 16.

by command of the constable, to pursue the felon, and is punishable, if he disobey, by fine and imprisonment [c]. And in this case, whether a felony was committed or not, or whether the person arrested (provided he be the person named or described by the hue and cry) be guilty or innocent, or of evil or good fame, the arrest is lawful and justifiable, and he who raised the hue and cry is alone to answer for the justice of it [d].

In this pursuit, likewise, the constable may search suspected houses, if the doors be open; but breaking the door will not be justifiable, unless the felon be actually in the house; nor even then unless admittance hath been first demanded and denied [e]. And what the constable may do himself will be justifiable by any other in his assistance; at least, by his command [f]. Indeed a private person may justify the arrest of an offender by the command of a peace officer; for he is bound to be aiding and assisting to such officer, is punishable for his refusal, and is consequently under the protection of the law [g].

Lastly, a private person may arrest a felon by virtue of a warrant directed to him: for though he is not bound to execute such warrant, yet if he doth, it is good and justifiable [h].

Thirdly, Officers of public justice may justify the arrest of a felon by virtue of their office, without any warrant. Whatever therefore a private person may do as above, will certainly be justifiable in them.

And as the arresting of felons, &c. is more particularly their duty, and their fine will be heavier for the neglect, so will their protection by the law be the greater: for if, in arresting those that are *probably suspected*, the constable should be killed, it is murder; on the other hand, if persons pursued by these officers for felony, or *justifiable suspicion thereof*, shall resist or fly from them; or being apprehended, shall rescue

[c] Hale's hist. vol. I. 588. vol. II. 104. [d] 29 Ed. III. 39.
35 Hen. IV. Pl. 24. Hale's hist. vol. II. 101—2. [e] lb.
102, 103. [f] Hale's hist. vol. II. 104. [g] Pult. 6. 15.
Hale's hist. vol. II. 86. [h] Dalt. 408. Hale's hist. vol.
II. 86.

themselves, resist or fly; so that they cannot *otherwise* be apprehended or re-apprehended, and are of *necessity* slain, it is no felony in the officers, or in their assistants, though possibly the parties killed are innocent; for, by resisting the king's authority in his officers, they draw their own blood on themselves [i].

Again, To take a felon or suspected felon, the constable without any warrant may break open the door. But to justify this, he must shew; 1. That the felon, &c. was in the house. 2. That his entry was denied. 3. That it was denied after demand and notice that he was constable [k].

Lastly, A felon may be apprehended by virtue of a warrant issuing from a magistrate lawfully authorized; in the execution of which the officer hath the same power, and will, at least, have the same protection by law as in the arrest *virtute officii*. And this warrant, if it be specially directed to him, the constable may execute in any part within the jurisdiction of the magistrate; but he is only obliged to execute it within the division for which he is constable, &c.

In the execution of a warrant for felony, the officer may break open the doors of the felon or of any person where he is concealed; and the breaking the doors of the felon is lawful at all events, but in breaking those of a stranger the officer acts at his peril: for he will be a trespasser if the felon should not be there [l].

Such are the powers which the law gives for the apprehending felons (for as to the particular power of sheriffs and coroners, and the process of superior courts, they may well be passed by in this place). Again, these powers we see are enforced with penalties; so that not only every officer of justice, but every private person, is obliged to arrest a known felon, and may be punished for the omission.

Nor doth the law stop here. The apprehending such felons is not only authorized and enjoined, but even encouraged, with impunity to persons guilty themselves of felony, and with regard to others.

[i] Dalt. 409. 13 Ed. IV. 4, & 9. 5 to 92. Hale's hist. vol. II. 86. 90, 91.

[k] lb. vol. I. 581. vol. II. 110.

[l] Hale's hist. vol. I. 582. vol. II. 117. 5 Co. 91 b.

By 3 and 4 of [m] William and Mary, Persons guilty of robbery in the highway, fields, &c. who, being out of prison, shall discover any two offenders to be convicted of such robbery, are entitled to his majesty's pardon of such robberies, &c. as they shall have then committed.

By 10 and 11 of [n] William III. this is extended to burglary, and such felonies as are mentioned in the act.

By the same act, all persons who shall apprehend a felon for privately stealing goods to the value of 5s. out of shop, warehouse, coach-house, or stable, by night or by day (provided the felon be convicted thereof) shall be entitled to a certificate, which may be assigned once, discharging such apprehender or his assignee from all parochial offices in the parish or ward where such felony was committed. This certificate is to be enrolled by the clerk of the peace, and cannot be assigned after it hath been used.

If any man be killed by such house-breaker, &c. in the attempt to apprehend him, his executors or administrators shall be entitled to such certificate.

By the 3 and 4 of [o] W. and M. whoever shall apprehend and prosecute to conviction any robber on the highway, shall receive of the sheriff 40l. within a month after the conviction for every offender; and in case of the death or removal of the sheriff, the money to be paid by the succeeding sheriff within a month after the demand and certificate brought. The sheriff on default forfeits double the sum, to be recovered of him by the party, his executors, &c.

And if the person be killed in this attempt by any such robber, the executors of such person, &c. are entitled to the reward, under the like penalty.

Again, By the same act the horse, furniture, arms, money, or other goods, taken with such highwaymen, are given to the apprehender who shall prosecute to conviction, notwithstanding the right or title of his majesty, any body politic or lord of franchise, or of

[m] Chap. viii.
ubi supra.

[n] Chap. xxiii.

[o] Chap. viii.

those who lent or let the same to hire to such robber, with a saving only of the right of such persons from whom such horses, &c. were feloniously taken.

By a statute of queen Anne, the 40*l.* reward is extended to burglary and housebreaking.

But though the law seems to have been sufficiently provident on this head; there is still great difficulty in carrying its purpose into execution, arising from the following causes:

First, With regard to private persons, there is no country, I believe, in the world, where that vulgar maxim so generally prevails, that what is the business of every man is the business of no man; and for this plain reason, that there is no country in which less honour is gained by serving the public. He therefore who commits no crime against the public, is very well satisfied with his own virtue; far from thinking himself obliged to undergo any labour, expend any money, or encounter any danger, on such account.

2dly, The people are not entirely without excuse from their ignorance of the law: for so far is the power of apprehending felons, which I have above set forth, from being universally known, that many of the peace officers themselves do not know that they have any such power, and often, from ignorance, refuse to arrest a known felon till they are authorized by a warrant from a justice of peace. Much less then can the compulsory part to the private persons carry any terror of a penalty of which the generality of mankind are totally ignorant; and of inflicting which they see no example.

Thirdly, So far are men from being animated with the hopes of public praise to apprehend a felon, that they are even discouraged by the fear of shame. The person of the informer is in fact more odious than that of the felon himself; and the thief-catcher is in danger of worse treatment from the populace than the thief.

Lastly, As to the reward, I am afraid that the intention of the legislature is very little answered. For not to mention that the prosecutor's title to it is too often defeated by the foolish lenity of juries, who, by

acquitting the prisoner of the burglary and finding him guilty of the simple felony only, or by finding the goods to be less than the value of 5*s*. both often directly contrary to evidence, take the case entirely out of the act of parliament; and sometimes even when the felon is properly convicted, I have been told, that the money does not come so easily and fully to the pockets of those who are entitled to it as it ought.

With regard to the first and fourth of these objections, I chuse to be silent: to prescribe any cure for the former, I must enter into disquisitions very foreign to my present purpose; and for the cure of the latter, when I consider in whose power it is to remedy it, a bare hint will, I doubt not, suffice.

The second objection, namely, the excuse of ignorance, I have here endeavoured to remove, by setting forth the law at large.

The third therefore only remains, and to that I shall speak more fully, as the opinion on which it is founded is of the most pernicious consequence to the society; for what avail the best of laws, if it be a matter of infamy to contribute towards their execution? The force of this opinion may be seen in the following instance: We have a law by which every person who drives more than six horses in a waggon forfeits as many horses as are found to exceed that number. This law is broken every day, and generally with impunity: for though many men yearly venture and lose their lives by stealing horses, yet there are very few who dare seize a horse, where the law allows and encourages it, when by such seizure he is to acquire the name of an informer: so much worse is this appellation in the opinion of the vulgar than that of thief; and so much more prevalent is the fear of popular shame than of death.

This absurd opinion seems to have first arisen from the statute of 18 [p] Eliz. entitled, *An act to redress disorders in common informers*. By this statute it appears, that very wicked uses had been made of penal

statutes by these informers, whom my lord Coke calls [9] *turbidum hominum genus*; and says, 'That they converted many penal laws, which were obsolete, and in time grown impossible or inconvenient to be performed, into snares to vex and intangle the subject.'

By the statute itself it appears, that it was usual at that time among these persons to extort money of ignorant and fearful people by the terror of some penal law; for the breach of which the informer either instituted a process, or pretended to institute a process, and then brought the timorous party to a composition.

This offence therefore was by this act made a high misdemeanor, and punished with the pillory.

Now who that knows any thing of the nature or history of mankind, doth not easily perceive here a sufficient foundation for that odium to all informers which hath since become so general: for what is more common than from the abuse of any thing to argue against the use of it, or to extend obloquy from particulars to universals?

For this the common aptitude of men to scandal will sufficiently account; but there is still another and stronger motive in this case, and that is the interest of all those who have broken or who intend to break the laws. Thus, the general cry being once raised against prosecutors on penal laws, the thieves themselves have had the art and impudence to join it, and have put their prosecutors on the footing of all others: nay, I much question whether, in the acceptation of the vulgar, a thief-catcher be not a more odious and contemptible name than even that of informer.

Nothing, I am sensible, is more vain than to encounter popular opinion with reason; nor more liable to ridicule than to oppose general contempt; and yet I will venture to say, that if to do good to society be laudable, so is the office of a thief-catcher; and if to do this good at the extreme hazard of your life be honourable, then is this office honourable. True, it may be

[9] 3 Inst. c. lxxxvii.

said: but he doth this with a view to a reward. And doth not the soldier and the sailor venture his life with the same view? for, who, as a great man lately said, serves the public for nothing?

I know what is to be my fate in this place, or what would happen to one who should endeavour to prove that the hangman was a great and an honourable employment. And yet I have read in Tournefort, of an island in the Archipelago, where the hangman is the first and highest officer in the state. Nay, in this kingdom, the sheriff himself (who was one of the most considerable persons in his county) is in law the hangman, and Mr. Ketch is only his deputy.

If to bring thieves to justice be a scandalous office, what becomes of all those who are concerned in this business, some of whom are rightly thought to be among the most honourable officers in government? if on the contrary this be, as it surely is, very truly honourable, why should the post of danger in this warfare alone be excluded from all share of honour?

To conclude a matter, in which, though serious, I will not be too tedious: what was the great Pompey in the piratic war [r]? what were Hercules, Theseus, and other the heroes of old, *Deorum in templa recepti*—Were they not the most eminent of thief-catchers?

S E C T. VII.

Of the difficulties which attend prosecutions.

INOW come to a fourth encouragement which greatly holds up the spirits of robbers, and which they often find to afford no deceitful consolation; and this is drawn from the remissness of prosecutors, who are often,

1. Fearful, and to be intimidated by the threats of the gang; or,

2. Delicate, and cannot appear in a public court; or,

[r] Cicero in his Oration *pro Lege Manilia* calls this, if I remember rightly, *Bellum Turpe*; but speaks of the extirpation of these robbers as of the greatest of all Pompey's exploits;

3. Indolent

3. Indolent, and will not give themselves the trouble of a prosecution; or,

4. Avaricious, and will not undergo the expence of it; nay, perhaps find their account in compounding the matter; or,

5. Tender-hearted, and cannot take away the life of a man; or,

6. Lastly, necessitous, and cannot really afford the cost, however small, together with the loss of time which attends it.

The first and second of these are too absurd, and the third and fourth too infamous to be reasoned with. But the two last deserve more particular notice, as the fifth is an error springing originally out of a good principle in the mind, and the sixth is a fault in the constitution very easily to be remedied.

With regard to the former of these, it is certain, that a tender-hearted and compassionate disposition, which inclines men to pity and feel the misfortunes of others, and which is, even for its own sake, incapable of involving any man in ruin and misery, is of all tempers of mind the most amiable; and though it seldom receives much honour, is worthy of the highest. The natural energies of this temper are indeed the very virtues principally inculcated in our excellent religion; and those, who, because they are natural, have denied them the name of virtues, seem not, I think, to be aware of a doctrine that denies all merit to a mind which is naturally, I may say necessarily, good.

Indeed the passion of love, or benevolence, whence this admirable disposition arises, seems to be the only human passion that is in itself simply and absolutely good; and in Plato's commonwealth or (which is more) in a society acting up to the rules of *Christianity*, no danger could arise from the highest excess of this virtue; nay, the more liberally it was indulged, and the more extensively it was expanded, the more would it contribute to the honour of the individual, and to the happiness of the whole.

But as it hath pleased God to permit human societies to be constituted in a different manner, and knaves to form a part (a very considerable one, I am

afraid) of every community, who are ever lying in wait to destroy and ensnare the honest part of mankind, and to betray them by means of their own goodness, it becomes the good-natured and tender-hearted man to be watchful over his own temper; to restrain the impetuosity of his benevolence, carefully to select the objects of this passion, and not by too unbounded and indiscriminate an indulgence to give the reins to a courser, which will infallibly carry him into the ambuscade of the enemy.

Our Saviour himself inculcates this prudence among his disciples, telling them, that he *sent them forth like sheep among wolves: be ye therefore, says he, wise as serpents, but innocent as doves.*

For want of this wisdom, a benevolent and tender-hearted temper very often betrays men into errors not only hurtful to themselves, but highly prejudicial to the society. Hence men of invincible courage, and incorruptible integrity, have sometimes falsified their trust; and those, whom no other temptation could sway, have paid too little regard to the sanction of an oath, from this inducement alone. Hence likewise the mischief which I here endeavour to obviate hath often arisen; and notorious robbers have lived to perpetrate future acts of violence, through the ill-judging tenderness and compassion of those who could and ought to have prosecuted them.

To such a person I would suggest these considerations:

First, As he is a good man, he should consider, that the principal duty which every man owes, is to his country, for the safety and good of which all laws are established; and therefore his country requires of him to contribute all that in him lies to the due execution of those laws. Robbery is an offence not only against the party robbed, but against the public, who are therefore entitled to prosecution; and he who prevents or stifles such the prosecution, is no longer an innocent man, but guilty of a high offence against the public good.

Secondly, As he is a good-natured man, he will behold all injuries done by one man to another with indignation.

dignation. What Cicero says of a pirate, is as true of a robber, that he is *hostis humani generis*; and if so, I am sure every good-natured man must be an enemy to him. To desire to save these wolves in society, may arise from benevolence; but it must be the benevolence of a child or a fool, who, from want of sufficient reason, mistakes the true objects of his passion, as a child doth when a bugbear appears to him to be the object of fear. Such tender-heartedness is indeed barbarity, and resembles the meek spirit of him who would not assist in blowing up his neighbour's house, to save a whole city from the flames. 'It is true,' said a late learned chief justice [s], in a trial for treason, 'here is the life of a man in the case, but then you (speaking to the jury) must consider likewise the misery and desolation, the blood and confusion, that must have happened, had this taken effect; and put one against the other, I believe that consideration which is on behalf of the king, will be much the stronger.' Here likewise is the life of a man concerned; but of what man? why, of one who being too lazy to get his bread by labour, or too voluptuous to content himself with the produce of that labour, declares war against the properties, and often against the persons, of his fellow subjects; who deprives his countrymen of the pleasure of travelling with safety, and of the liberty of carrying their money or their ordinary conveniences with them; by whom the innocent are put in terror, affronted and alarmed with threats and execrations, endangered with loaded pistols, beat with bludgeons, and hacked with cutlasses, of which the loss of health, of limbs, and often of life, is the consequence; and all this without any respect to age, or dignity, or sex. Let the good-natured man, who hath any understanding, place this picture before his eyes, and then see what figure in it will be the object of his compassion.

I come now to the last difficulty which obstructs the prosecution of offenders; namely, the extreme poverty of the prosecutor. This I have known to be so ab-

[s] Lord chief justice Pratt.

solutely the case, that the poor wretch who hath been bound to prosecute, was under more concern than the prisoner himself. It is true, that the necessary cost on these occasions is extremely small; two shillings, which are appointed by act of parliament for drawing the indictment, being, I think, the whole which the law requires; but when the expence of attendance, generally with several witnesses, sometimes during several days together, and often at a great distance from the prosecutor's home; I say, when these articles are summed up, and the loss of time added to the account, the whole amounts to an expence which a very poor person, already plundered by the thief, must look on with such horror (if he should not be absolutely incapable of the expence) that he must be a miracle of public spirit, if he doth not rather choose to conceal the felony, and sit down satisfied with his present loss; but what shall we say, when (as is very common in this town) he may not only receive his own again, but be farther rewarded, if he will agree to compound it?

Now how very inconsiderable would be the whole cost of this suit either to the country or the nation; if the public, to whom the justice of peace gives his whole labour on this head *gratis*, was to defray the cost of such trials, by a kind of *forma pauperis* admission. The sum would be so trivial, that nothing would be felt but the good consequences arising from such a regulation.

I shall conclude this head with the words of my lord Hale: 'It is,' said he, 'a great defect in the law, to give courts of justice no power to allow witnesses against criminals their charges; whereby,' says he, 'many poor persons grow weary of their attendance, or bear their own charges therein, to their great hindrance and loss.'

S E C T. IX.

Of the TRYAL and CONVICTION of FELONS.

BUT if, notwithstanding all the rubs which we have seen to lie in the way, the indictment is found, and the thief brought to his trial, still he hath sufficient hopes of escaping, either from the caution of the prosecutor's evidence, or from the hardness of his own.

In street robberies, the difficulty of convicting a criminal is extremely great. The method of discovering these is generally by means of one of the gang, who, being taken up, perhaps for some other offence, and thinking himself in danger of punishment, chooses to make his peace at the expence of his companions.

But when, by means of his information, you are made acquainted with the whole gang, and have, with great trouble, and often with great danger, apprehended them, how are you to bring them to justice? for though the evidence of the accomplice be ever so positive and explicit, nay, ever so connected and probable, still, unless it be corroborated by some other evidence, it is not sufficient.

Now how is this corroborating evidence to be obtained in this case? Street robberies are generally committed in the dark, the persons on whom they are committed are often in chairs and coaches, and if on foot, the attack is usually begun by knocking the party down, and for the time depriving him of his senses. But if the thief should be less barbarous, he is seldom so incautious as to omit taking every method to prevent his being known, by flapping the party's hat over his face, and by every other method which he can invent to avoid discovery.

But indeed any such methods are hardly necessary: for when we consider the circumstance of darkness, mentioned before, the extreme hurry of the action, and the terror and consternation in which most persons are in at such a time, how shall we imagine it possible, that they should afterwards be able, with any (the least)

least) degree of certainty, to swear to the identity of the thief, whose countenance is, perhaps, not a little altered by his subsequent situation, and who takes care, as much as possible he can, by every alteration of dress, and otherwise, to disguise himself?

And if the evidence of the accomplice be so unlikely to be confirmed by the oath of the prosecutor, what other means of confirmation can be found? for as to his character, if he himself doth not call witnesses to support it (which in this instance is not incumbent on him to do), you are not at liberty to impeach it; the greatest and most known villain in England, standing at the bar equally *rectus in curia* with the man of the highest estimation, if they should be both accused of the same crime.

Unless therefore the robbers should be so unfortunate as to be apprehended in the fact (a circumstance which their numbers, arms, &c. renders ordinarily impossible) no such corroboration can possibly be had; but the evidence of the accomplice standing alone and unsupported, the villain, contrary to the opinion and almost direct knowledge of all present, is triumphantly acquitted, laughs at the court, scorns the law, vows revenge against his prosecutors, and returns to his trade with a great increase of confidence, and commonly of cruelty.

In a matter therefore of so much concern to the public, I shall be forgiven, if I venture to offer my sentiments.

The words of my lord Hale are these: ' Though a *particeps criminis* be admissible as a witness in law, yet the credibility of his testimony is to be left to the jury; and truly it would be hard to take away the life of any person upon such a witness that swears to save his own, and yet confesseth himself guilty of so great a crime, unless there be also very considerable circumstances, which may give the greater credit to what he swears [*r*].'

Here I must observe, that this great man seems rather to complain of the hardship of the law, in taking

[*r*] Hale's hist. v. i. 305.

away the life of a criminal on the testimony of an accomplice, than to deny that the law was so. This indeed he could not well do; for not only the case of an approver, as he himself seems to acknowledge, but many later resolutions, would have contradicted that opinion.

zely, He allows that the credibility of his testimony is to be left to the jury: and so is the credibility of all other testimonies. They are absolute judges of the fact; and God forbid that they should in all cases be tied down by positive evidence against a prisoner, though it was not delivered by an accomplice.

But surely, if the evidence of an accomplice be not sufficient to put the prisoner on his defence, but the jury are directed to acquit him, though he can produce no evidence on his behalf, either to prove an *alibi*, or to his character, the credibility of such testimony cannot well be said to be left to a jury. This is virtually to reject the competency of the witness: for to say the law allows him to be sworn, and yet gives no weight to his evidence is, I apprehend, a mere play of words, and conveys no idea.

In the third place, this great man asserts the hardship of such conviction. Now if the evidence of a supposed accomplice should convict a man of fair and honest character: it would, I confess, be hard; and it is a hardship of which, I believe, no experience can produce any instance. But if, on the other hand, the testimony of an accomplice with every circumstance of probability attending it against a vagabond of the vilest character, and who can produce no single person to his reputation, is to be absolutely rejected, because there is no positive proof to support it; this, I think, is in the highest degree hard (I think I have proved how hard) to the society.

I shall not enter here into a disquisition concerning the nature of evidence in general; this being much too large a field; nor shall I examine the utility of those rules which our law prescribes on this head. Some of these rules might perhaps be opened a little wider than they are, without either mischief or inconvenience; and I am the bolder in the assertion, as I know

know a very learned judge who concurs with this opinion. There is no branch of the law more bulky, more full of confusion and contradiction, I had almost said of absurdity, than the law of evidence as it now stands.

One rule of this law is, that no man interested shall be sworn as a witness. By this is meant pecuniary interest; but are mankind governed by no other passion than avarice? is not revenge the sweetest morsel, as a divine calls it, which the devil ever dropped into the mouth of a sinner? are not pride, hatred, and the other passions, as powerful tyrants in the mind of man; and is not the interest which these passions propose to themselves by the enjoyment of their object, as prevalent a motive to evil as the hope of any pecuniary interest whatever?

But to keep more closely to the point—Why shall not any credit be given to the evidence of an accomplice?—My lord Hale tells us, that he hath been guilty of a great crime; and yet, if he had been convicted and burnt in the hand, all the authorities tell us, that his credit had been restored; a more miraculous power of fire than any which the *royal society* can produce. The same happens, if he be pardoned.

Again, says lord Hale, he swears to save his own life. This is not altogether so: for when once a felon hath impeached his companions, and is admitted an evidence against them, whatever be the fate of his evidence, the impeacher always goes free. To this, it is true, he hath no positive title; no more hath he, if a single felon be convicted on his oath. But the practice is as I mention, and I do not remember any instance to the contrary.

But what inducement hath the accomplice to perjure himself, or what reason can be assigned why he should be suspected of it? that he himself was one of the robbers, appears to a demonstration; that he had accomplices in the robbery, is as certain. Why then should he be induced to impeach A and B, who are innocent, and not C and D, who are guilty? must he not think that he hath a better chance of convicting the guilty than the innocent? is he not liable, if he gives a false information,

information, to be detected in it? one of his companions may be discovered and give a true information, what will then become of him and his evidence? and why should he do this? from a motive of friendship? do the worst of men carry this passion so much higher than is common with the best? - but he must not only run the risque of his life but of his soul too. The very mention of this latter risque may appear ridiculous, when it is considered of what sort of persons I am talking. But even these persons can scarce be thought so very void of understanding as to lose their souls for nothing, and to commit the horrid sins of perjury and murder without any temptation, or prospect of interest, nay, even against their interest. Such characters are not to be found in history, nor do they exist any where but in distempered brains, and are always rejected as monsters, when they are produced in works of fiction: for surely we spoil the verse rather than the sense by saying, *nemo gratis fuit turpissimus*. Under such circumstances, and under the caution of a good judge, and the tenderness of an English jury, it will be the highest improbability that any man should be wrongfully convicted; and utterly impossible to convict an honest man: for I intend no more than that such evidence shall put the prisoner on his defence, and oblige him either to controvert the fact by proving an *alibi*, or by some other circumstance; or to produce some reputable person to his character. And this brings me to consider the second fortress of the criminal in the hardness of his own evidence.

The usual defence of a thief, especially at the Old Baily, is an *alibi* [u]: to prove this by perjury, is a common act of Newgate friendship; and there seldom is any difficulty in procuring such witnesses. I remember a felon within this twelvemonth to have been proved to be in Ireland at the time when the robbery was sworn to have been done in London, and acquitted; but he was scarce gone from the bar, when the witness was himself arrested for a robbery committed in London at that very time when he swore both he

[u] i. e. That he was at another place at the time.

and his friend were in Dublin : for which robbery, I think, he was tried and executed. This kind of defence was in a great measure defeated by the late baron Thompson, when he was recorder of London, whose memory deserves great honour for the services he did the public in that post. These witnesses should always be examined with the utmost care and strictness, by which means the truth (especially if there be more witnesses than one to the pretended fact) will generally be found out. And as to character, though I allow it to have great weight, if opposed to the single evidence of an accomplice, it should surely have but little where there is good and strong proof of the fact; and none at all, unless it comes from the mouths of persons, who have themselves some reputation and credit.

S E C T. X.

Of the encouragement given to robbers by frequent pardons.

I COME now to the sixth encouragement to felons, from the hopes of a pardon, at least with the condition of transportation.

This I am aware, is too tender a subject to speak to. To pardon all crimes where the prosecution is in his name, is an undoubted prerogative of the king. I may add, it is his most amiable prerogative, and that which, as Livy observes [w], renders kingly government most dear to the people, for in a republic there is no such power. I may add farther, that it seems to our excellent sovereign to be the most favourite part of his prerogative, as it is the only one which hath been carried to its utmost extent in the present reign.

Here, therefore, I beg to direct myself only to those persons who are within the reach of his majesty's sacred ear. Such persons will, I hope, weigh well what I have said already on the subject of false compassion, all which is applicable on the present occasion : and since

[w] Dec. 1. 1. ii. cap. 3. *Esse Gratiz locum esse Beneficii : et irasci et ignoscere posse (Regem scilicet) inter amicum atque inimicum Discrimen nosse, Legem rem surdam inexorabilem esse, &c.*

our king (as was with less truth said of another [x]) *is of all men the truest image of his Maker in mercy*, I hope too much good-nature will transport no nobleman so far as it once did a clergyman in Scotland, who, in the fervour of his benevolence, prayed to God that he would graciously be pleased to pardon the poor devil.

To speak out fairly and honestly [y], though mercy may appear more amiable in a magistrate, severity is a more wholesome virtue; nay, severity to an individual may, perhaps, be in the end the greatest mercy, not only to the public in general, for the reason given above, but to many individuals, for the reasons to be presently assigned.

To consider a human being in the dread of a sudden and violent death; to consider that his life or death depend on your will; to reject the arguments which a good mind will officiously advance to itself; that violent temptations, necessity, youth, inadvertency, have hurried him to the commission of a crime which hath been attended with no inhumanity; to resist the importunities, cries, and tears of a tender wife, and affectionate children, who, though innocent, are to be reduced to misery and ruin by a strict adherence to justice. These all together form an object which, whoever can look upon without emotion, must have a very bad mind; and whoever by the force of reason can conquer that emotion, must have a very strong one.

And what can reason suggest on this occasion? first, that by saving this individual, I shall bring many others into the same dreadful situation. That the passions of the man are to give way to the principles of the magistrate. Those may lament the criminal, but these must condemn him. It was nobly said by Bias to one who admired at his shedding tears whilst he past sentence of death, 'Nature exacts my tenderness, but the law my rigour.' The elder Brutus [z] is a worthy pattern of this maxim; an example, says Machiavel, most worthy of being transmitted to posterity.

[x] By Dryden of Charles II.

[y] Disc. l. iii. c. iii.

[z] He put his two sons to death for conspiring with Tarquin.

Neither Livy nor Dionysius give any character of cruelty to Brutus; indeed the latter tells us, *that he was superior to all those passions which disturb human reason.* *Τῶν ἐκταρατῶν τὰς λογισμῶν ἀνὰ καρδίαν.* And

And Dionysius Halicarnassus [a] calls it a *great and wonderful action*, of which the Romans were proud in the most extraordinary degree. Whoever derives it therefore from the want of humane and paternal affections is unjust; no instances of his inhumanity are recorded. 'But the severity,' says Machiavel, 'was not only profitable but necessary;' and why? because a single pardon granted *ex mera gratia & favore*, is a link broken in the chain of justice, and takes away the concatenation and strength of the whole. The danger and certainty of destruction are very different objects, and strike the mind with different degrees of force. It is of the very nature of hope to be sanguine; and it will derive more encouragement from one pardon, than diffidence from twenty executions.

It is finely observed by Thucydides [b], 'That though civil societies have allotted the punishment of death to many crimes, and to some of the inferior sort, yet hope inspires men to face the danger; and no man ever came to a dreadful end, who had not a lively expectation of surviving his wicked machinations.'—Nothing certainly can more contribute to the raising this hope than repeated examples of ill-grounded clemency; for, as Seneca says, *ex clementia omnes idem sperant* [c].

Now what is the principal end of all punishment? is it not, as lord [d] Hale expresses it, 'To deter men from the breach of laws, so that they may not offend, and so not suffer at all? and is not the inflicting of punishment more for example, and to prevent evil, than to punish?' and therefore, says he, presently afterwards, 'Death itself is necessary to be annexed to laws in many cases by the prudence of law-givers, though possibly beyond the single merit of the offence simply considered.' No man indeed of common humanity or common sense can think the life of a man and a few shillings to be of an equal consideration, or that the law in punishing theft with

[a] Page 272. Edit. Hudson.

[b] P. 174. Edit. Hudson.

[c] De Clementia, lib. i. c. i.

[d] Hale's hist. vol. I. p. 13.

death proceeds (as perhaps a private person sometimes may) with any view to vengeance. The terror of the example is the only thing proposed, and one man is sacrificed to the preservation of thousands.

If therefore the terror of this example is removed (as it certainly is by frequent pardons) the design of the law is rendered totally ineffectual; the lives of the persons executed are thrown away, and sacrificed rather to the vengeance than to the good of the public, who receives no other advantage than by getting rid of a thief, whose place will immediately be supplied by another. Here then we may cry out with the poet [e]:

— — — *Sævior Ense*
Parcendi Rabies — — —

This, I am confident, may be asserted, that pardons have brought many more men to the gallows than they have saved from it. So true is that sentiment of Machiavel, that examples of justice are more merciful than the unbounded exercise of pity [f].

S E C T. XI.

Of the manner of execution.

BUT if every hope which I have mentioned fails the thief: if he should be discovered, apprehended, prosecuted, convicted, and refused a pardon; what is his situation then? surely most gloomy and dreadful, without any hope, and without any comfort. This is, perhaps, the case with the less practised, less spirited, and less dangerous rogues; but with those of a different constitution it is far otherwise. No hero sees death as the alternative which may attend his undertaking with less terror, nor meets it in the field with more imaginary glory. Pride, which is commonly the uppermost passion in both, is in both excited with equal satisfaction. The day appointed

[e] Claudian.

[f] In his Prince.

by the law for the thief's shame is the day of glory in his own opinion. His procession to Tyburn, and his last moments there, are all triumphant; attended with the compassion of the meek and tender-hearted, and with the applause, admiration, and envy of all the bold and hardened. His behaviour in his present condition, not the crimes, how atrocious soever, which brought him to it, are the subject of contemplation. And if he hath sense enough to temper his boldness with any degree of decency, his death is spoke of by many with honour, by most with pity, and by all with approbation.

How far such an example is from being an object of terror, especially to those for whose use it is principally intended, I leave to the consideration of every rational man; whether such examples as I have described are proper to be exhibited, must be submitted to our superiors.

The great cause of this evil is the frequency of executions: the knowledge of human nature will prove this from reason; and the different effects which executions produce in the minds of the spectators in the country where they are rare, and in London where they are common, will convince us by experience. The thief who is hanged to-day hath learnt his intrepidity from the example of his hanged predecessors, as others are now taught to despise death, and to bear it hereafter with boldness from what they see to-day.

One way of preventing the frequency of executions is by removing the evil I am complaining of: for this effect in time becomes a cause; and greatly encreases that very evil from which it first arose. The design of those who first appointed executions to be public, was to add the punishment of shame to that of death; in order to make the example an object of greater terror. But experience hath shewn us that the event is directly contrary to this intention. Indeed, a competent knowledge of human nature might have foreseen the consequence. To unite the ideas of death and shame is not so easy as may be imagined; all ideas of the latter being absorbed by the former. To prove this, I will appeal to any man who hath seen an execution,

execution, or a procession to an execution; let him tell me when he hath beheld a poor wretch, bound in a cart, just on the verge of eternity, all pale and trembling with his approaching fate, whether the idea of shame hath ever intruded on his mind? much less will the bold daring rogue, who glories in his present condition, inspire the beholder with any such sensation.

The difficulty here will be easily explained, if we have recourse to the poets (for the good poet and the good politician do not differ so much as some who know nothing of either art affirm; nor would Homer or Milton have made the worst legislators of their times): the great business is to raise terror, and the poet will tell you, that admiration or pity, or both, are very apt to attend whatever is the object of terror in the human mind. This is very useful to the poet, but very hurtful on the present occasion to the politician, whose art is to be here employed to raise an object of terror, and, at the same time, as much as possible, to strip it of all pity and all admiration.

To effect this, it seems that the execution should be as soon as possible after the commission and conviction of the crime; for if this be of an atrocious kind, the resentment of mankind being warm, would pursue the criminal to his last end, and all pity for the offender would be lost in detestation of the offence. Whereas, when executions are delayed so long as they sometimes are, the punishment and not the crime is considered; and no good mind can avoid compassionating a set of wretches, who are put to death we know not why, unless, as it almost appears, to make a holiday for, and to entertain, the mob.

Secondly, It should be in some degree private. And here the poets will again assist us. Foreigners have found fault with the cruelty of the English drama, in representing frequent murders upon the stage. In fact, this is not only cruel, but highly injudicious: a murder behind the scenes, if the poet knows how to manage it, will affect the audience with greater terror than if it was acted before their eyes. Of this we have an instance in the murder of the king in Macbeth, at which, when Garrick acts the part, it is scarce an hyperbole

hyperbole to say, I have seen the hair of the audience stand on end. Terror hath, I believe, been carried higher by this single instance, than by all the blood which hath been spilt on the stage.—To the poets I may add the priests, whose politics have never been doubted. Those of Egypt in particular, where the sacred mysteries were first devised, well knew the use of hiding from the eyes of the vulgar what they intended should inspire them with the greatest awe and dread. The mind of man is so much more capable of magnifying than his eye, that I question whether every object is not lessened by being looked upon; and this more especially when the passions are concerned: for these are ever apt to fancy much more satisfaction in those objects which they affect, and much more of mischief in those which they abhor, than are really to be found in either.

If executions therefore were so contrived, that few could be present at them, they would be much more shocking and terrible to the croud without doors than at present, as well as much more dreadful to the criminals themselves, who would thus die in the presence only of their enemies; and where the boldest of them would find no cordial to keep up his spirits, nor any breath to flatter his ambition.

3dly, The execution should be in the highest degree solemn. It is not the essence of the thing itself, but the dress and apparatus of it, which make an impression on the mind, especially on the minds of the multitude, to whom beauty in rags is never a desirable, nor deformity in embroidery a disagreeable, object.

Montaigne, who, of all men, except only Aristotle, seems best to have understood human nature, enquiring into the causes why death appears more terrible to the better sort of people than to the meaner, expresses himself thus: 'I do verily believe, that it is those terrible ceremonies and preparations where- with we set it out, that more terrify us than the thing itself; a new and contrary way of living, the cries of mothers, wives, and children, the visits of astonished and afflicted friends, the attendance of pale and blubbered servants, a dark room set round
with

‘ with burning tapers, our beds environed with physicians and divines, in fine, nothing but ghastliness and horror round about us, render it so formidable, that a man almost fancies himself dead and buried already [g].’

‘ If the image of death, says the same author, was to appear thus dreadful to an army, they would be an army of whining milk-sops; and where is the difference but in the apparatus? thus in the field (I may add, at the gallows) what is encountered with gaiety and unconcern, in a sickbed becomes the most dreadful of all objects.’

In Holland, the executions (which are very rare) are incredibly solemn. They are performed in the area before the stadthouse, and attended by all the magistrates. The effect of this solemnity is inconceivable to those who have not observed it in others, or felt it in themselves; and to this, perhaps more than to any other cause, the rareness of executions in that country is owing.

Now the following method, which I shall venture to prescribe, as it would include all the three particulars of celerity, privacy, and solemnity, so would it, I think, effectually remove all the evils complained of, and which at present attend the manner of inflicting capital punishment.

Suppose then, that the court at the Old Baily was, at the end of the trials, to be adjourned during four days; that, against the adjournment-day, a gallows was erected in the area before the court; that the criminals were all brought down on that day to receive sentence; and that this was executed the very moment after it was pronounced, in the sight and presence of the judges.

Nothing can, I think, be imagined (not even torture, which I am an enemy to the very thought of admitting) more terrible than such an execution; and I leave it to any man to resolve himself upon reflexion, whether such a day at the Old Baily, or a holiday at

Tyburn, would make the strongest impression on the minds of every one.

Thus I have, as well as I am able, finished the task which I proposed, have endeavoured to trace the evil from the very fountain-head, and to shew whence it originally springs, as well as all the supplies it receives, till it becomes a torrent, which at present threatens to bear down all before it.

And here I must again observe, that if the former part of this treatise should raise any attention in the legislature, so as effectually to put a stop to the luxury of the lower people, to force the poor to industry, and to provide for them when industrious, the latter part of my labour would be of very little use; and indeed all the pains which can be taken in this latter part, and all the remedies which can be devised, without applying a cure to the former, will be only of the palliative kind, which may patch up the disease, and lessen the bad effects, but never can totally remove it.

Nor, in plain truth, will the utmost severity to offenders be justifiable, unless we take every possible method of preventing the offence. *Nemo ad supplicia exigenda provenit, nisi qui remedia consumpsit*, says Seneca [b], where he represents the governors of kingdoms in the amiable light of parents. The subject, as well as the child, should be left without excuse before he is punished: for, in that case alone, the rod becomes the hand either of the parent or the magistrate.

All temptations therefore are to be carefully removed out of the way; much less is the plea of necessity to be left in the mouth of any. This plea of necessity is never admitted in our law; but the reason of that is, says Lord Hale, because it is so difficult to discover the truth. Indeed that it is not always certainly false, is sufficient scandal to our polity; for what can be more shocking than to see an industrious poor creature, who is able and willing to labour,

[b] De Clementia, lib. ii. Frag.

forced by mere want into dishonesty, and that in a nation of such trade and opulence.

Upon the whole, something should be, nay, must be done, or much worse consequences than have hitherto happened, are very soon to be apprehended. Nay, as the matter now stands, not only care for the public safety, but common humanity, exacts our concern on this occasion; for that many cart-loads of our fellow-creatures are once in six weeks carried to slaughter, is a dreadful consideration; and this is greatly heightened by reflecting, that, with proper care and proper regulations, much the greater part of these wretches might have been made not only happy in themselves, but very useful members of the society, which they now so greatly dishonour in the sight of all Christendom.

END OF VOL. XI.

